★ Eagles Take It Easy ★ Stones Take A Fall ★

ROLLING STONE

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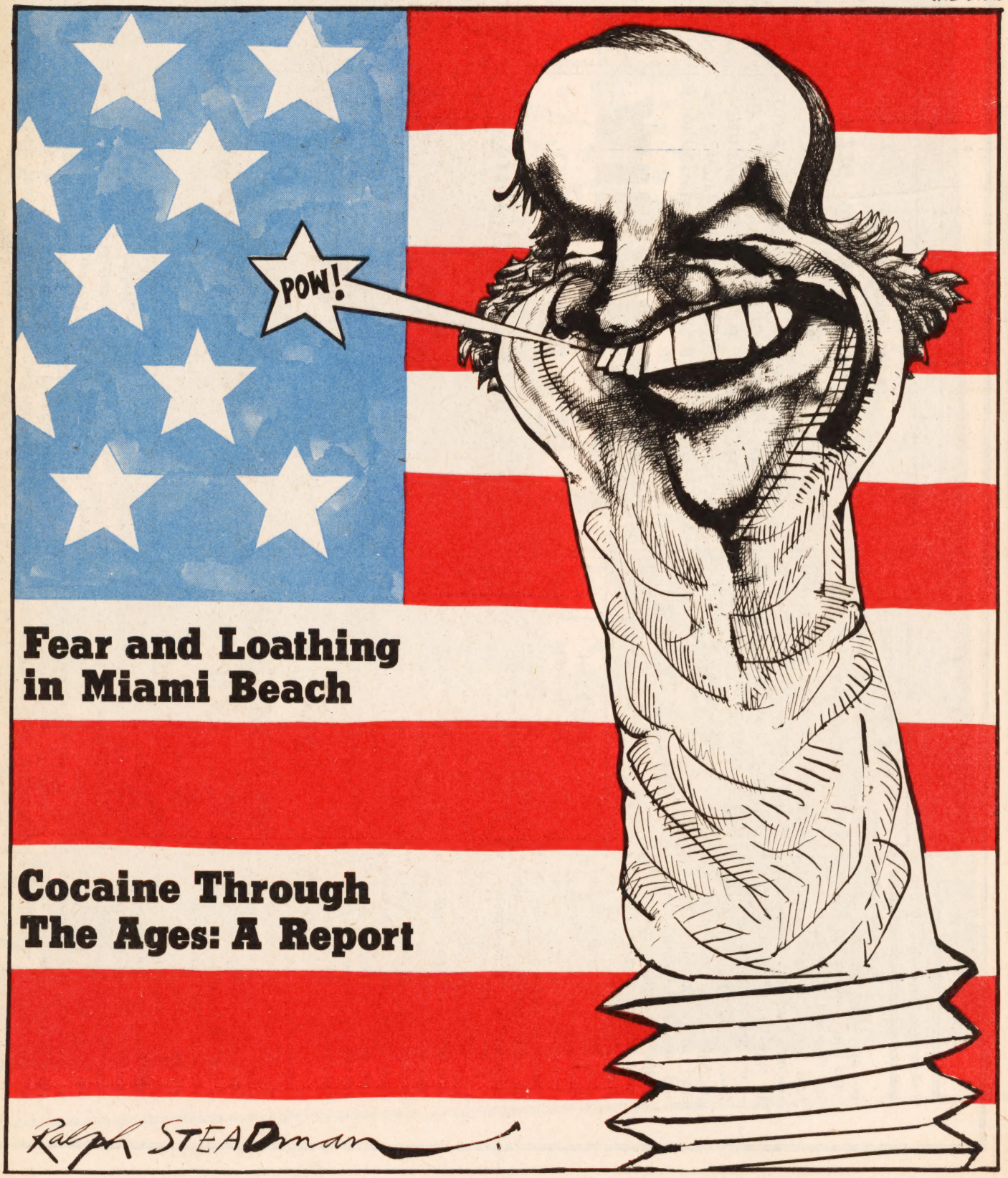

Fear and Loathing in Miami Beach

Cocaine Through The Ages: A Report

Fear & Loathing in Miami:

Old Bulls Meet the Butcher

by Hunter S. Thompson

A Dreary Saga Direct From the Sunshine State . . . How George McGovern Ran Wild in Fat City and Stomped Almost Everybody . . . Flashback to the Famous Lindsay Blueprint & a Strange Epitaph for The Battle of Chicago . . . More Notes on The Politics of Vengeance, . . . Including Massive Technical Advice from Rick Stearns and the Savage Eye of Ralph Steadman . . .

Do not go gentle into that good night.
Rage! Rage! Against the dying of the light.

—Dylan Thomas

Sunday is not a good day for traveling in the South. Most public places are closed—especially the bars and taverns—in order that the denizens of this steamy, atavistic region will not be distracted from church. Sunday is the Lord's day, and in the South he still has clout—or enough, at least, so that most folks won't cross him in public. And those few who can't make it to church will likely stay home by the fan, with iced tea, and worship Him in their own way.

This explains why the cocktail lounge in the Atlanta airport is not open on Sunday night. The Lord wouldn't dig it.

Not even in Atlanta, which the local chamber of commerce describes as the Enlightened, Commercial Capital of the "New South." Atlanta is an alarmingly liberal city, by Southern standards—known for its "progressive" politicians, non-violent race relations and a tax structure agressively favorable to New Business. It is also known for moonshine whiskey, a bad biker/doper community, and a booming new porno-film industry.

Fallen pom-pom girls and ex-cheerleaders from Auburn, 'Bama and even Ole Miss come to Atlanta to "get into show business," and those who take the wrong fork wind up being fucked, chewed and beaten for $100 a day in front of hand-held movie cameras. Donkeys and wolves are $30 extra, and the going rate for gangbangs is $10 a head, plus "the rate." Connoiseurs of porno-films say you can tell at a glance which ones were made in Atlanta, because of the beautiful girls. There is nowhere else in America, they say, where a fuck-flick producer can hire last year's Sweetheart of Sigma Chi to take on 12 Georgia-style Hell's Angels for $220 & lunch.

So I was not especially surprised when I got off the plane from Miami around midnight and wandered into the airport to find the booze locked up. What the hell? I thought: This is only the *public* bar. At this time of night—in the heart of the bible belt and especially on Sunday—you want to look around for something *private*.

Every airport has a "VIP Lounge." The one in Atlanta is an elegant, neo-private spa behind a huge wooden door near Gate 11. Eastern Airlines maintains it for the use of traveling celebrities, politicians and other conspicuous persons who would rather not be seen drinking in public with the Rabble.

I had been there before, back in February, sipping a midday beer with John Lindsay while we waited for the flight to L.A. He had addressed the Florida state legislature in Tallahassee that morning; the Florida primary was still two weeks away, Muskie was still the front-runner, McGovern was campaigning desperately up in New Hampshire and Lindsay's managers felt he was doing well enough in Florida that he could afford to take a few days off and zip out to California. They had already circled June 6th on the Mayor's campaign calendar. It was obvious, even then, that the California primary was going to be

The Big One: Winner-take-all for 271 delegate votes, more than any other state, and the winner in California would almost certainly be the Democratic candidate for President of the United States in 1972.

Nobody argued that. The big problem in February was knowing which two of the 12 candidates would survive until then. If California was going to be the showdown, it was also three months and 23 primaries away—a long and grueling struggle before the field would narrow down to only two.

Ed Muskie, of course, would be one of them. In late February—and even in early March—he was such an overwhelming favorite that every press wizard in Washington had already conceded him the nomination. At that point in the campaign, the smart-money scenario had Big Ed winning comfortably in New Hampshire, finishing a strong second to Wallace a week later in Florida, then nailing it in Wisconsin on April 4th.

New Hampshire would finish McGovern, they said, and Hubert's ill-advised Comeback would die on the vine in Florida. Jackson and Chisholm were fools, McCarthy and Wilbur Mills were doomed tokens . . . and that left only Lindsay, a maverick Republican who had only recently switched parties. But he had already caused a mild shock wave on the Democratic side by beating McGovern badly—and holding Muskie to a stand-off—with an 11th hour, "Kennedy-style" campaign in non-primary Arizona, the first state to elect delegates.

Lindsay's lieutenants saw that success in Arizona as the first spark for what would soon be a firestorm. Their blueprint had Lindsay compounding his momentum by finishing a strong third or even second in Florida, then polarizing the party by almost beating Muskie in Wisconsin—which would set the stage for an early Right/Left showdown in Massachusetts, a crucial primary state with 102 delegates and a traditionally liberal electorate.

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The key to that strategy was the idea that Muskie could not hold the Center, because he was basically a candidate of the Democratic Right, like Scoop Jackson, and that he would move instinctively in that direction at the first sign of challenge from his Left—which would force him into a position so close to Nixon's that eventually not even the Democratic "centrists" would tolerate him.

There was high ground to be seized on The Left, Lindsay felt, and whoever seized it would fall heir to that far-flung, leaderless army of Kennedy/McCarthy zealots from 1968 . . . along with 25 million new voters who would naturally go 3-1 against Nixon—unless the Democratic candidate turned out to be Hubert Humphrey or a Moray Eel—which meant that almost anybody who could strike sparks with the "new voters" would be working off a huge and potentially explosive new power base that was worth—on paper, at least—anywhere between five percent and 15 percent of the total vote. It was a built-in secret weapon for any charismatic Left-bent underdog who could make the November election even reasonably close.

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Now, walking down a long empty white corridor in the Atlanta airport on a Sunday night in July, I had a very clear memory of my last visit to this place—but it seemed like something that had happened five years ago, instead of only five months. The Lindsay campaign was a loose, upbeat trip while it lasted, but there is a merciless kind of "out of sight, out of mind" quality about a losing presidential campaign . . . and when I saw Lindsay on the convention floor in Miami, sitting almost unnoticed in the front row of the New York delegation, it was vaguely unsettling to recall that less than six months ago he was attracting big crowds out on Collins Avenue—just one block east of his chair, that night, in the Miami Beach convention hall—and that every word he said, back then, was being sucked up by three or four network TV crews and echoed on the front pages of every major newspaper from coast to coast.

As it turned out, the Lindsay campaign was fatally flawed from the start. It was all tip and no iceberg—the exact opposite of the slow-building McGovern juggernaut—but back in February it was still considered very shrewd and avant-garde to assume that the most important factor in a presidential campaign was a good "media candidate." If he had Star Quality, the rest would take care of itself.

The Florida primary turned out to be a funeral procession for would-be "media candidates." Both Lindsay and Muskie went down in Florida—although not necessarily because they geared their pitch to TV; the real reason, I think, is that neither one of them understood how to *use* TV . . . or maybe they knew, but just couldn't pull it off. It is hard to be super-convincing on the tube, if everything you say reminds the TV audience of a Dick Cavett commercial for Alpo dogfood. George McGovern has been widely ridiculed in the press as "The ideal anti-media candidate." He looks wrong, talks wrong, and even acts wrong—by conventional TV standards. But McGovern has his own ideas about how to use the tube. In the early primaries he kept his TV exposure to a minimum—for a variety of reasons that included a lack of both money and confidence—but by the time he got to California for the showdown with Hubert Humphrey, McGovern's TV campaign was operating on the level of a very specialized art form. His 30-minute biography—produced by Charley Guggenheim—was so good that even the most cynical veteran journalists said it was the best political film ever made for television . . . and Guggenheim's 60-second spots were better than the bio film. Unlike the early front-runners, McGovern had taken his time and learned how to use the medium—instead of letting the medium use him.

Sincerity is the important thing on TV. A presidential candidate should at least *seem* to believe what he's saying—even if it's all stone crazy. McGovern learned this from George Wallace in Florida, and it proved to be a very valuable lesson. One of the crucial moments of the '72 primary campaign came on election night in Florida, March 14th, when McGovern—who had finished a dismal sixth, behind even Lindsay and Muskie—refused to follow their sour example and blame his poor showing on that Evil Racist Monster, George Wallace, who had just swept every county in the state. Moments after both Lindsay and Muskie had appeared on all three networks to denounce the Florida results as tragic proof that at least half the voters were ignorant dupes and nazis, McGovern came on and said that although he couldn't agree with some of the things Wallace said and stood for, he sympathized with the people who'd voted for "The Governor" because they were "angry and fed up" with some of the things that are happening in this country.

"I feel the same way," he added. "But unlike Governor Wallace, I've proposed *constructive solutions* to these problems."

Nobody applauded when he said that. The 200 or so McGovern campaign workers who were gathered that night in the ballroom of the old Waverly Hotel on Biscayne Boulevard were not in a proper mood to cheer any praise for George Wallace. Their candidate had just been trounced by what they considered a dangerous bigot—and now, at the tail end of the loser's traditional concession statement, McGovern was saying that he and Wallace weren't really that far apart.

It was not what the ballroom crowd wanted to hear, at that moment. Not after listening to both Lindsay and Muskie denounce Wallace as a cancer in the soul of America . . . but McGovern wasn't talking to the people in that ballroom; he was making a very artful pitch to potential Wallace voters in the other primary states. Wisconsin was three weeks away, then Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan—and Wallace would be raising angry hell in every one of them. McGovern's braintrust, though, had come up with the idea that the Wallace vote was "soft"—that the typical Wallace voter, especially in the North and Midwest, was far less committed to Wallace himself than to his thundering, gut-level appeal to rise up and smash all the "pointy-headed bureaucrats in Washington" who'd been fucking them over for so long.

The root of the Wallace magic was a cynical, showbiz instinct for knowing exactly which issues would whip a hall full of beer-drinking factory workers into a frenzy—and then doing exactly that, by howling down from the podium that he had an instant, overnight cure for all their worst afflictions: Taxes? Nigras? Army worms killing the turnip crop? Whatever it was, Wallace assured his supporters that the solution was actually real simple, and that the only reason they had any hassle with the government at all was because those greedy bloodsuckers in Washington didn't *want* the problems solved, so they wouldn't be put out of work.

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The ugly truth is that Wallace had never even bothered to *understand* the problems—much less come up with any honest solutions—but "the Fighting Little Judge" has never lost much sleep from guilt feelings about his personal credibility gap. Southern politicians are not made that way. Successful con men are treated with considerable respect in the South. A good slice of the original settlers of that region were men who'd been given a choice between being shipped off to the New World in leg-irons, or spending the rest of their lives in English prisons. The Crown saw no point in feeding them year after year, and they were far too dangerous to turn loose on the streets of London—so, rather than overload the public hanging schedule, the King's Minister of Gaol decided to put this scum to work on the other side of the Atlantic, in The Colonies, where cheap labor was much in demand.

Most of these poor bastards wound up in what is now the Deep South, because of the wretched climate. No settler with good sense and a few dollars in his pocket would venture south of Richmond. There was plenty of opportunity around Boston, New York and Philadelphia—and by British standards the climate in places like South Carolina and Georgia was close to Hell on Earth: Swamps, alligators, mosquitos, tropical disease. . . . all this plus a boiling sun all day long and no way to make money unless you had a land grant from the King. . . .

So the South was sparsely settled, at first, and the shortage of skilled labor was a serious problem to the scattered aristocracy of would-be cotton barons who'd been granted huge tracts of good land that would make them all rich if they could only get people to work it.

The slave-trade was one answer, but Africa in 1699 was not a fertile breeding ground for middle-management types . . . and the planters said it was damn near impossible for one white man to establish any kind of control over a boatload of black primitives. The bastards couldn't even speak English. How could a man get the crop in, with brutes like that for help?

There would have to be managers, keepers, overseers: White men who spoke the language, and had a sense of purpose in life. But where would they come from? There was no middle class in the South: Only masters and slaves . . . and all that rich land lying fallow.

The King was quick to grasp the financial implications of the problem: The crops *must* be planted and harvested, in order to sell them for gold—and if all those lazy bastards needed was a few thousand half-bright English-speaking lackeys, in order to bring the crops in . . . hell, that was easy: Clean out the jails, cut back on the grocery bill, jolt the liberals off balance by announcing a new "Progressive Amnesty" program for hardened criminals. . . .

Wonderful. Dispatch royal messengers to spread a good word in every corner of the kingdom, and after that send out professional pollsters to record an amazing 66 percent jump in the King's popularity . . . then wait a few weeks before announcing the new 10 percent sales tax on ale.

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That's how the South got settled. Not the whole story, perhaps, but it goes a long way toward explaining why George Wallace is the Governor of Alabama. He has the same smile as his great-grandfather—a thrice-convicted pig thief from somewhere near Nottingham, who made a small reputation, they say, as a jailhouse lawyer, before he got shipped out.

Indeed. With a bit of imagination you can almost hear the cranky little bastard haranguing his fellow prisoners in London's infamous Hardcase jail, urging them on to revolt:

"Lissen here, you poor fools! There's not much time! Even now—up there in the tower—they're cookin up some kind of cruel new punishment for us! How much longer will we stand for it? And now they want to ship us across the ocean to work like slaves in a swamp with a bunch of goddamn Hottentots!

"We won't go! It's asinine! We'll tear this place apart before we'll let that thieving old faggot of a king send us off to work next to Africans!

"How much more of this misery can we stand, boys? I know you're fed right up to *here* with it. I can see it in your eyes—pure misery! And I'm tellin' you, we don't have to stand for it! We can send the king a message and tell him how we feel! I'll write it up, myself, and all you boys can sign it . . . or better still, I'll go talk to the king personally! All you boys have to do is dig me a little hole over there behind the gallows, and I'll. . . ."

Right. That bottom line never changes: "You folks be sure and come to see me in the White House, you hear? There'll be plenty of room for my friends, after I clean house . . . but first I need your vote, folks, and after that I'll. . ."

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George Wallace is one of the worst charlatans in politics, but there is no denying his talent for converting frustration into energy. What McGovern sensed in Florida, however—while Wallace was stomping him, along with all the others—was the possibility that Wallace appealed instinctively to a lot more people than would actually vote for him. He was stirring up more anger than he knew how to channel. The frustration was there, and it was easy enough to convert it—but what then? If Wallace had taken himself seriously as a presidential candidate—as a Democrat or anything else—he might have put together the kind of organization that would have made him a genuine threat in the primaries, instead of just a spoiler.

McGovern, on the other hand, had put together a fantastic organization—but until he went into Wisconsin he had never tried to tap the kind of energy that seemed to be flowing, perhaps by default, to Wallace. He had given it some thought while campaigning in New Hampshire, but it was only after he beat Muskie in two blue-collar, hardhat wards in the Middle of Manchester that he saw the possibility of a really mind-bending coalition: A weird mix of peace freaks and hardhats, farmers and film stars, along with urban blacks, rural chicanos, the "youth vote" . . . a coalition that could elect almost anybody.

Muskie had croaked in Florida, allowing himself to get crowded over on the Right with Wallace, Jackson and Humphrey—then finishing a slow fourth behind all three of them. At that point in the race, Lindsay's presumptuous blueprint was beginning to look like prophecy. The New Hampshire embarrassment had forced Muskie off-center in a mild panic, and now the party was polarized. The road to Wisconsin was suddenly clear in both lanes, fast traffic to the Left and the Right. The only mobile hazard was a slow-moving hulk called "The Muskie Bandwagon," creeping erratically down what his doom-stricken Media Manager called "that yellow stripe in the middle of the road."

The only other bad casualty, at that point, was Lindsay. His Wisconsin man-

Ralph STEADman
On the Floor Convention Hall
Miami. 1972
MASSACHUSETTS
IDAHO
ILLINOIS
MISSOURI
CALIFORNIA
COLORADO
DON'T LET'S EAT HIM
WALLA
Govern
PEABOD

COME HOME AMERICA!
CHICAGO
ALABAMA
NEW YORK
MONTANA
GONZOVILLE
NEW JERSEY
OREGON
JACKSON
MUSKI
KISSM
3M
WAR
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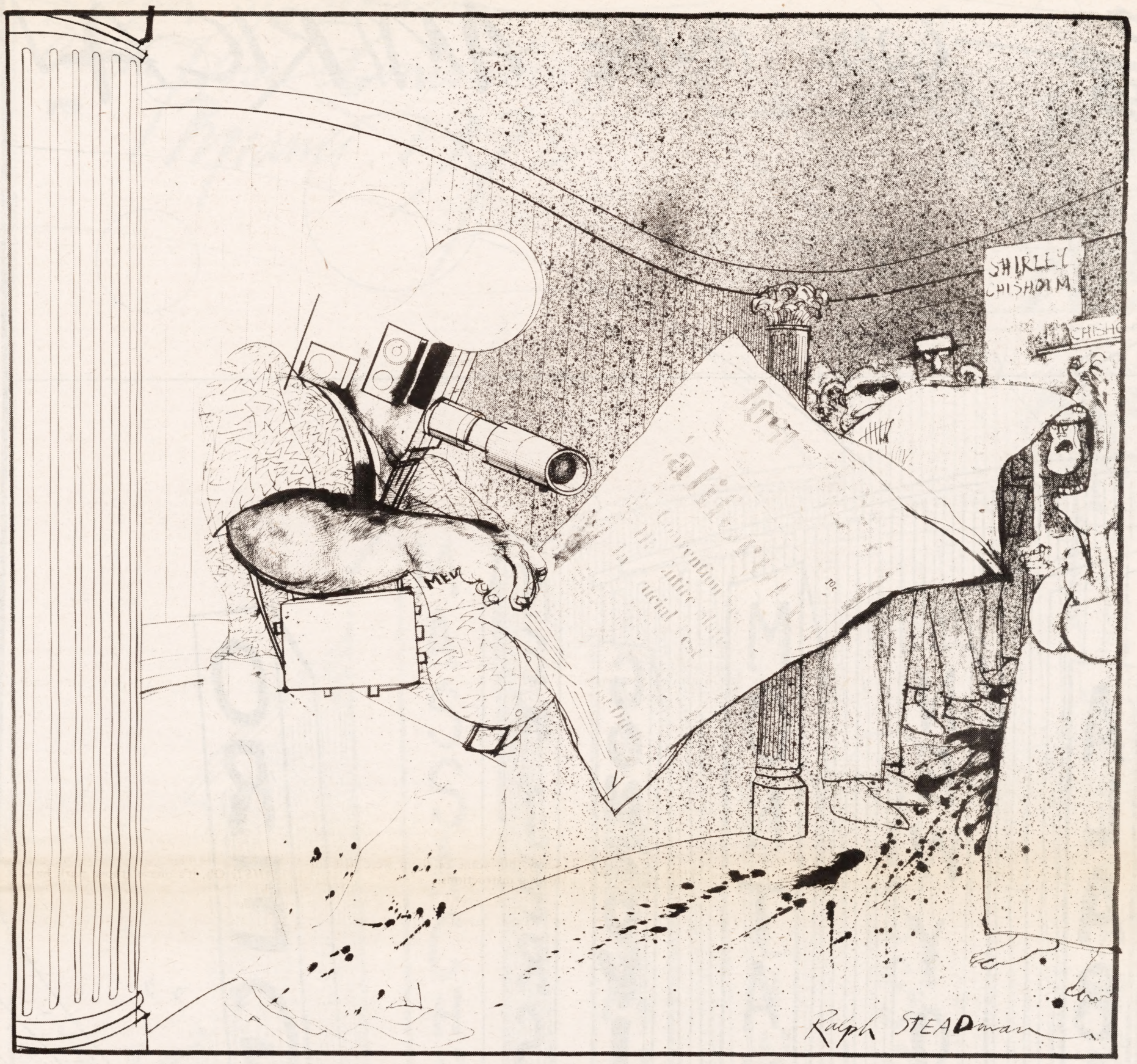

agers had discovered a fatal flaw in the blueprint: Nobody had bothered to specify the name of the candidate who would seize all that high ground on the Left, once Muskie got knocked off center. Whoever drew it up had apparently been told that McGovern would not be a factor in the later stages of the race. After absorbing two back-to-back beatings in New Hampshire and Florida, he would run out of money and be dragged off to the nearest glue factory . . . or, failing that, to some cut-rate retirement farm for old liberals with no charisma.

But something went wrong, and when Lindsay arrived in Wisconsin to seize that fine high ground on the Left that he knew, from his blueprint, was waiting for him—he found it already occupied, sealed off and well-guarded on every perimeter, by a legion of hard-eyed fanatics in the pay of George McGovern.

Gene Pokorny, McGovern's 25-year-old field organizer for Wisconsin, had the whole state completely wired. He had been on the job, full time, since the spring of '71—working off a blueprint remarkably similar to Lindsay's. But they were not quite the same. The main difference was painfully obvious, yet it was clear at a glance that both drawings had been done from the same theory: Muskie would fold early on, because The Center was not only indefensible but probably nonexistent . . . and after that the Democratic race would boil down to a quick civil war, a running death-battle between the Old Guard on the Right and a gang of Young Strangers on the Left.

The name-slots on Lindsay's blueprint were still empty, but the working assumption was that the crunch in California would come down to Muskie on the Right and Lindsay on the Left.

Pokorny's drawing was a year or so older than Lindsay's, and all the names were filled in—all the way to California, where the last two slots said, "McGovern" and "Humphrey." The only other difference between the two was that Lindsay's was unsigned, while Pokorny's had a signature in the bottom right hand corner: "Hart, Mankiewicz & McGovern—architects."

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Even Lindsay's financial backers saw the handwriting on the wall in Wisconsin. By the time he arrived, there was not even any low ground on the Left to be seized. The Lindsay campaign had been keyed from the start on the assumption that Muskie would at least have the strength to retire McGovern before he abandoned the center. It made perfect sense, on paper—but 1972 had not been a vintage year for paper wisdom, and McGovern's breakthrough victory in Wisconsin was written off as "shocking" and "freakish" by a lot of people who should have known better.

Wisconsin was the place where he found a working model for the nervous coalition that made the rest of the primary campaign a downhill run. Wisconsin effectively eliminated every obstacle but the corpse of Hubert Humphrey—who fought like a rabid skunk all the way to the end; cranked up on the best speed George Meany's doctors could provide for him, taking his cash and his orders every midnight from Meany's axe-man Al Barkan; and attacking McGovern savagely, day after day, from every treacherous angle Big Labor's sharpest researchers could even crudely define for him. . . .

It was a nasty swansong, for Hubert. He'd been signing those IOUs to Big Labor for more than 20 years, and it must have been a terrible shock to him when Meany called them all due at the same time.

But how? George Meany, the 77-year-old quarterback of the "Stop McGovern Movement," is said to be suffering from brain bubbles at this stage of the game. Totally paralyzed. His henchmen have kept him in seclusion ever since he arrived in Florida five days ago, with a bad case of The Fear. He came down from AFL-CIO headquarters in Washington by train, but had to be taken off somewhere near Fort Lauderdale and rushed to a plush motel where his condition deteriorated rapidly over the weekend, and finally climaxed on Monday night when he suffered a terrible stroke while watching the Democratic Convention on TV.

The story is still shrouded in mystery, despite the best efforts of the 5000 ranking journalists who came here to catch Meany's last act, but according to a wealthy labor boss who said he was there when it happened—the old man went all to pieces when his creature, Hubert Humphrey, lost the crucial "California challenge."

He raged incoherently at the Tube for eight minutes without drawing a breath, then suddenly his face turned beet red and his head swelled up to twice its normal size. Seconds later—while his henchmen looked on in mute horror—Meany swallowed his tongue, rolled out of his chair like a log, and crawled through a plate glass window.

The Young Bulls Take Charge; Cronkite & the Wizards Take a Fall; Humphrey Croaked and the Squeeze Play Explained on the Beach

"The confrontations with the Old Guard seldom come in public. There are conversations on the telephone, plans are laid, people are put to work, and it's done quietly. California is a classic. There will never be a case in American politics of such a naked power grab—straight power, no principle, straight opportunism. I wasn't aware of it. I thought it was a purely defensive move to protect themselves against attack. We were naive. It never occurred to me that anybody would challenge California—until the last 36 hours before the credentials committee meeting. Then we really got scared when we saw the ferocity of their attack."

—George McGovern, *talking to LIFE reporter, Richard Meryman in Miami*

What happened in Miami was far too serious for the kind of random indulgence that Gonzo journalism needs. The

Real Business happened, as usual, on secret-numbered telephones or behind closed doors at the other end of long hotel corridors blocked off by sullen guards. There were only two crucial moments in Miami—two potential emergencies that might have changed the outcome—and both of them were dealt with in strict privacy.

The only real question in Miami was whether or not McGovern might be stripped of more than half of the 271 delegates he won in the California primary—and that question was scheduled to come up for a vote by the whole convention on Monday night. If the "ABM Movement" could strip 151 of those delegates away, McGovern might be stopped—because without them he had anywhere from 10 to 50 votes less than the 1509 that would give him the nomination on the first ballot. But if McGovern could hold his 271 California delegates, it was all over.

The "ABM Movement" (Anybody but McGovern) was a coalition of desperate losers, thrown together at the last moment by Big Labor chief George Meany and his axe-man, Al Barkan. Hubert Humphrey was pressed into service as the front man for ABM, and he quickly signed up the others: Big Ed, Scoop Jackson, Terry Sanford, Shirley Chisholm—all the heavies.

The ABM movement came together, officially, sometime in the middle of the week just before the convention, when it finally became apparent that massive fraud, treachery or violence was the only way to prevent McGovern from getting the nomination. . . . and what followed, once this fact was accepted by all parties involved, will hopefully go down in history as one of the most shameful episodes in the history of the Democratic process.

It was like a scene from the final hours of the Roman Empire: Everywhere you looked, some prominent politician was degrading himself in public. By noon on Sunday both Humphrey and Muskie were so desperate that they came out of their holes and appeared—trailing a mob of photographers and TV crews—in the lobby of the Fountainbleu, the nexus hotel about 500 yards down the beach from the Doral, racing back and forth from one caucus or press conference to another, trying to make any deal available—on any terms—that might possibly buy enough votes to deny McGovern a first-ballot victory.

The ABM strategy—a very shrewd plan, on paper—was to hold McGovern under the 1500 mark for two ballots, forcing him to peak without winning, then confront the convention with an alternative (ABM) candidate on the third ballot—and if that failed, try *another* ABM candidate on the fourth ballot, then yet another on the fifth, etc. . . . on into infinity, for as many ballots as it would take to nominate somebody acceptable to the Meany-Daley axis.

The name didn't matter. It didn't even make much difference if He, She or It couldn't possibly beat Nixon in November . . . the only thing that mattered, to the Meany-Daley crowd, was *keeping control of The Party*; and this meant the nominee would have to be some loyal whore with more debts to Big Labor than he could ever hope to pay . . . somebody like Hubert Humphrey, or a hungry opportunist like Terry Sanford.

Anybody but George McGovern—the only candidate in Miami, that week, who would be under no obligation to give either Meany or Daley his private number if he ever moved into the White House.

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But all that noxious bullshit went by the boards, in the end. The ABM got chewed up like green hamburger on opening night. They were beaten stupid at their own game by a handful of weird-looking kids who never even worked up a sweat. By midnight on Monday it was all over. Once McGovern got a lock on those 271 delegates, there was never any doubt about who would get the nomination on Wednesday.

The blow-by-blow story of how McGovern beat the ABM will become an instant fixture in political science textbooks, regardless of who wins in November—but it's not an easy thing to explain. If a transcript existed, it would read more like an extremely complicated murder trial than the simple, outfront political convention that most people think they watched on TV. Trying to understand the byzantine reality of that convention on TV—or even on the floor, for that matter—was like somebody who's never played chess trying to understand a live telecast of the Fisher-Spassky duel up in Iceland.

The bedrock truths of the McGovern convention were not aired on TV—except once, very briefly on Monday night; but it hardly mattered, because all three networks missed it completely. When the deal went down, Walter Cronkite saw green and called it red, John Chancellor opted for yellow, and ABC was already off the air.

What happened, in a nut, was a surprise parliamentary maneuver—cooked up by over-ambitious strategists in the Women's Caucus—forcing a premature showdown that effectively decided whether or not McGovern would get the nomination. The crisis came early, at a time when most of the TV/Press people were still getting their heads ready to deal with all the intricate possibilities of the vote on the ABM challenge to McGovern's California delegates . . . and when Larry O'Brien announced a pending roll-call vote on whether or not the South Carolina delegation included enough women, very few people on the Floor or anywhere else understood that the result of that roll-call might determine exactly how many delegates would later vote for McGovern on the California challenge, and then on the First Ballot.

On the evidence, less than a dozen of the 5000 "media" sleuths accredited to the convention knew exactly what was happening, at the time. When McGovern's young strategists deliberately lost that vote, almost everybody who'd watched it—including Walter Cronkite—concluded that McGovern didn't have a hope in hell of winning any roll-call vote from that point on: Which meant the ABM could beat him on the California challenge, reducing his strength even further, and they stop him cold on the first ballot.

Humphrey's campaign manager, Jack Chestnut, drew the same conclusion—a glaring mistake that almost immediately became the subject of many crude jokes in McGovern's press room at the Doral, where a handful of resident correspondents who'd been attached to the campaign on a live-in basis for many months were watching the action on TV with press secretary Dick Dougherty and a room full of tense staffers—who roared with laughter when Cronkite, far up in his soundproof booth two miles away in the Convention hall, announced that CBS was about to switch to McGovern headquarters in the Doral, where Dick Schumacher was standing by with a first-hand report and at least one painfully candid shot of McGovern workers reacting to the news of this stunning setback.

The next scene showed a room full of laughing, whooping people. Schumacher was grinning into his microphone, saying: "I don't want to argue with you, Walter—but why are these people cheering?"

Shumacher then explained that McGovern had actually won the nomination by losing the South Carolina vote. It had been a test of strength, no doubt—but what had never been explained to the press or even to most of McGovern's own delegates on the floor, was that he had the option of "winning" that roll-call by going either up or down . . . and the only way the ABM crowd could have won was by juggling their votes to make sure the South Carolina challenge *almost* won, but not quite. This would have opened the way for a series of potentially disastrous parliamentary moves by the Humphrey-led ABM forces.

"We had to either win decisively or lose decisively," Rick Stearns explained later. "We couldn't afford a close vote."

Stearns, a 28-year-old Rhodes Scholar from Stanford, was McGovern's point man when the crisis came. His job in Miami—working out of a small white trailer full of telephones behind the Convention Hall—was to tell Gary Hart, on the floor, exactly how many votes McGovern could muster at any given moment, on any question—and it was Stearns who decided, after only 10 out of 50 states had voted on the South Carolina challenge, that the final tally might be too close to risk. So he sent word to Hart on the floor, and Gary replied: "Okay, if we can't win big—let's lose it."

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"The old bulls never quit until the young bulls run them out. The old bulls are dead, but don't forget that the young bulls eventually become old bulls too."

—James H. Rowe, "an old professional from FDR's days," in Time Magazine

The next time I saw Rick Stearns, after he croaked the Humphrey/Meany squeeze play on Monday night, was out on the beach in front of the Doral on Saturday afternoon. He was smoking a cigar and carrying a tall plastic glass of beer—wearing his black and red Stanford tank shirt. I sat with him for a while and talked as the Coast Guard cutters cruised offshore about a hundred yards from the beach and National Guard helicopters and jets thundered overhead. It was the first time in ten days I'd had a chance to feel any sun and by midnight I was burned, drunk and unable to get any sleep—getting up every 15 minutes to rub more grease on my head and shoulders.

(Airplane)

HST: I was reading Haynes Johnson's thing in the Washington Post about how you won South Carolina. He mainly had it from Humphrey's side; he cited the fact that it fooled almost everybody. He said only a few McGovern staffers knew.

Stearns: No, that's not true. The guys in the trailer operation knew. The floor leaders, the ones who paid attention, knew; but some of them were just following instructions.

HST: That was it, more or less?

Stearns: That was it, although if you have that many people who know, chances are . . .

HST: Well, I was standing with Tom Morgan, Lindsay's press secretary; I don't know if anybody told him, but he figured it out. Then I went out in the hall and saw Tom Braden, the columnist. He said, "Oh, Jesus! Terrible! A bad defeat." Then I was really confused.

Stearns: Johnny Apple of the New York Times rushed out and filed the story which went to [Times Managing Editor] Abe Rosenthal. Rosenthal was sitting watching Walter Cronkite sputter on about the great setback the McGovern forces had, you know, the terrible defeat. So he killed Apple's story.

HST: Oh, Jesus!

Stearns: Apple got on the phone to Rosenthal and they had a shouting match for 30 minutes that ended with Apple resigning from the NY Times.

HST: Cazart!

Stearns: But he was hired back at the end of the next day. They never ran his story, but he was hired back at what I assume was a substantial increase in his salary.

HST: There was a reference in Johnson's story to a private discussion on Sunday. He said you'd explained the strategy 24 hours earlier.

Stearns: Let's see. What could that have been? The floor leaders meeting?

HST: He didn't say. You saw it coming that early? Sunday? Or even before that? When did you see the thing coming?

Stearns: It became clear during the maneuvering that went on the week before the Convention when we were trying to define several key parliamentary points.

HST: You'd seen this coming up all the week before during this maneuvering with Larry O'Brien and James G. O'Hara, the convention parliamentarian?

Stearns: Well, I'd seen it as of Thursday when we began to get some idea of how O'Brien and O'Hara intended to rule on the two issues, but as early as then we were going over a whole war game of possible parliamentary contingencies. The Humphrey camp would have never turned to procedural chicanery if they'd really had a working majority on the floor. The essential point is that procedure is the last defense of a vanishing majority.

First, who could vote, under the rules, on their own challenge? Did the rule which says a delegate can vote on anything but his own challenge mean that the 120 McGovern delegates from California not being challenged would be able to vote? We contended that they could. Eventually the chairman agreed.

The second and most important question was the question of what constituted a majority—whether it was a constitutional majority, or, as we originally contended, a majority of those present-and-voting. The chair's decision on that was a compromise between the two rules—that the majority would be determined by those *eligible* to vote. And he ruled then that since everyone but 153 bogus delegates from California were eligible, the majority on the California question would be 1433. So, in other words, we won the first point on who could vote. On the second point we came up with a compromise which was really to our advantage . . .

HST: What did you lose on that?

Stearns: Well, the only thing we lost was that, if it had been present-and-voting, it would have meant that we could have picked up extra votes by urging people just not to vote: if they were caught between pressures from labor on one hand and us on the other and couldn't find any way out of the dilemma, they could leave, and their absence then would lower the majority.

On the third issue we . . .

(Helicopter)

HST: Damn! Fuck! I can't believe those fuckin' helicopters! Christ! I'll leave it on the tape just to remind me how bad it was.

Stearns: The LEAA [the Federal Law Enforcement Assistance Act]. . .

HST: Oh, it's one of those pork barrel . . .

Stearns: . . . One thing Jerry and Abbie did for the city of Miami was to beef up the technology of the police department with that grant Miami got to buy all this stuff.

Well, the third point—which we lost and which we were arguing obviously because it was in our interest—was that the challenges ought to be considered in the order of the roll-call. This would have put California first and would have avoided the problem entirely, of course. On that, the chair ruled against us, and I think fairly. He followed the precedent of the last Conventions, which was that challenges were to be considered in the order in which the Credentials Committee had discussed them. That meant that we had South Carolina, Alabama, Georgia and Kentucky—four possible test cases—coming before we got to the California vote.

Kentucky we got withdrawn, eliminating one of them. Cashin's Alabama challenge was the same challenge he brought in '68. It's not a very attractive challenge. A lot of people felt that they had been misled by Cashin in '68, including blacks, and were not disposed to work for him again. He was trying to get Wallace thrown out of the Convention. Wallace's slate had been openly elected. Alabama was one of the first states in the country to comply with the reform rules. Voters happened to choose Wallace delegates. [*Airplane*] So we knew the Alabama challenge would be defeated on a voice vote. On Georgia, Julian [Bond] and Governor Jimmy Carter worked out a compromise. South Carolina was the only possible test vote to come up before the California challenge.

There were two procedural issues that the Humphrey coalition wanted to settle on the South Carolina challenge. The first was that question of *who* could vote. The chair ruled that there were nine South Carolinian women who had not been challenged, who would be entitled to vote on the challenge. It is a 32-

—*Continued on Next Page*

member delegation, which meant that there were then 23 South Carolinians who were disqualified.

The second area of challenge—and the most troublesome—is what constituted a majority. That was what the Humphrey people went after first. The maneuvering that was going on! There was only one way that that question of what constituted a majority could arise, and that was if either side prevailed in the range of 1497 to 1508 votes. If either side prevailed by more than a constitutional majority, 1509, the question is moot.

It sounds impossible to maneuver a vote into that area, but in fact it's very easy if you have a Humphrey delegation controlled as well as Ohio. Ohio passed and passed and passed. All Frank King, their chairman, had to do was sit there, add correctly, cast the vote accordingly and we would have been in that area. Not only that, we would have been sucked into that area with an *artificial* vote from the Ohio delegation, which means that on the procedural test. . .

(Helicopter)

HST: You son of a bitch!

Stearns: If we'd let ourselves be sucked into that trap, I think we would have lost both the procedural tests.

HST: I see. They could lend you votes on one rollcall, then take them back on the next one.

Stearns: A bogus count. If you look at the tally on the South Carolina challenge, the Minnesota delegation on which Humphrey had 35 hard-core votes went 56-to-8 for the South Carolina challenge, so there were at least 35 votes that the Humphrey coalition could have manipulated. In Ohio, Humphrey had as many as 80 votes that could have been cast any way that Humphrey forces chose to cast them.

So our problem was to maneuver ourselves around the Ohio delegation in a way that the Ohio votes could not be cast to force us into a test vote on California before we got to the real issue. And remember, to win a procedural test on California, it would only require turning out 1433 votes, but South Carolina would have had to have 1497 votes to win the same procedural question as to who could vote and what constituted a majority.

HST: That's why you wanted to put it off till California?

Stearns: The numbers were much better for us on California than they were on South Carolina.

HST: I was asking [McGovern pollster] Pat Caddell why you didn't just get it over with, and he was running back and forth on the floor and just said, "Well, we want to wait for California." But he never explained why.

Stearns: It was the difference in what was the working majority on the floor. Plus, it's much harder to hold delegates on procedural questions since they don't understand the significance of a parliamentary point. Everyone had gotten clear enough instructions on how to handle California that I think they were aware of the procedural problem if it had arisen with the California vote, which it did.

My instructions to our floor leaders and to our delegation chairman was that on the first 12 tallies we would go all out to win the South Carolina minority report challenges. Perhaps not *all* out. We would go out to win, but not to the extent of jeopardizing votes we had on the California challenge. If there was somebody whose support we knew we had on California, but weren't sure if he would be able to withstand pressure from labor, Humphrey or whoever else, they were not to bother the guy. We didn't want to sacrifice votes on California. But that aside, we went after that challenge. That didn't quite work, because I had a number of passes in the first 12 states that reported, which meant that I put off the decision another eight or nine tallies.

HST: The passes weren't for political reasons, but because they couldn't make up their minds?

Stearns: Well, one for political reasons—that was the Ohio delegation, which was passing so it could put itself in the position of voting last so it could maneuver the vote and throw us into the procedural test. The others, just because it took a long time to get the counting done in the delegation.

HST: What was the woman's angle? It was talked about like it was some kind of shameful trip or something.

Stearns: The Women's Caucus was disputing the fact that only nine members of the 32-member delegation were women. The women made the South Carolina Minority Report their test vote to the Convention. I personally don't think they had a terribly good case.

Their case was based on a misunderstanding of the McGovern guidelines. The misunderstanding was thinking that quotas had somehow been established. What the McGovern commission argued was that quotas would be imposed if the state did not take effective steps to see that women were represented in reasonable proportions. That is, they had to take down all the barriers to women being elected, but there was no guarantee in the guidelines that because a woman was a woman, she was necessarily going to be elected. The guidelines attempted to give women the same chance of election that men had, removing some of the obstacles that kept them off slates in the past.

It was not a terribly good challenge in the first place, but no credentials challenge has ever really been decided strictly on the justice and merits of the challenge. They all come down to essentially political questions and in that case the Women's Caucus made what was in effect a weak challenge into a political issue. So it had to be treated seriously. This is why we set out at the beginning to try to win it, to try to see if we had the votes to win it the first time around.

HST: It was sort of forced on you.

Stearns: Well, it was, but I don't think the Women's Caucus really understood the significance of an early test vote. I would have much preferred that they would have picked—well, they had a much better case in Hawaii, for example, because the challenge came up after both the California and Illinois decisions. If we had to have a test vote on a women's issue, I'd rather they had picked a stronger case, Hawaii, which also would have moved the test vote after California.

HST: Why did they insist on being first?

Stearns: I'm not sure of the process they went through to pick South Carolina, but they had chosen it, and that made the issue of South Carolina one that one had to respond to as a political question.

HST: But they weren't somehow hooked into the Chisholm/Humphrey/stop-McGovern thing in order to get some bargaining power?

Stearns: I think there may have been some thought of that—the fact that it was to come first would give them some leverage with us that they might otherwise not have had. My intentions were to win that California challenge.

(Also on the beach is Bill Dougherty, Lieutenant Governor of South Dakota, longtime McGovern crony and a key floor leader who worked under Stearns. Forty-two years old, he is wearing trunks and a short-sleeve shirt and staring at the surf.)

Dougherty: You know, this is the first time I've ever seen the ocean. Oh, I *saw* it out in California, but not like this. Not close up.

HST: Were you over there for the Democratic National Committee meeting?

Dougherty: Shit, I never got out of bed all day yesterday. I'm on the national committee. I've got McGovern really pissed at me. I never showed up. I couldn't move. I absolutely couldn't move yesterday. I was sick. I was just sick, physically.

HST: Well, there's a lot of people that are sick.

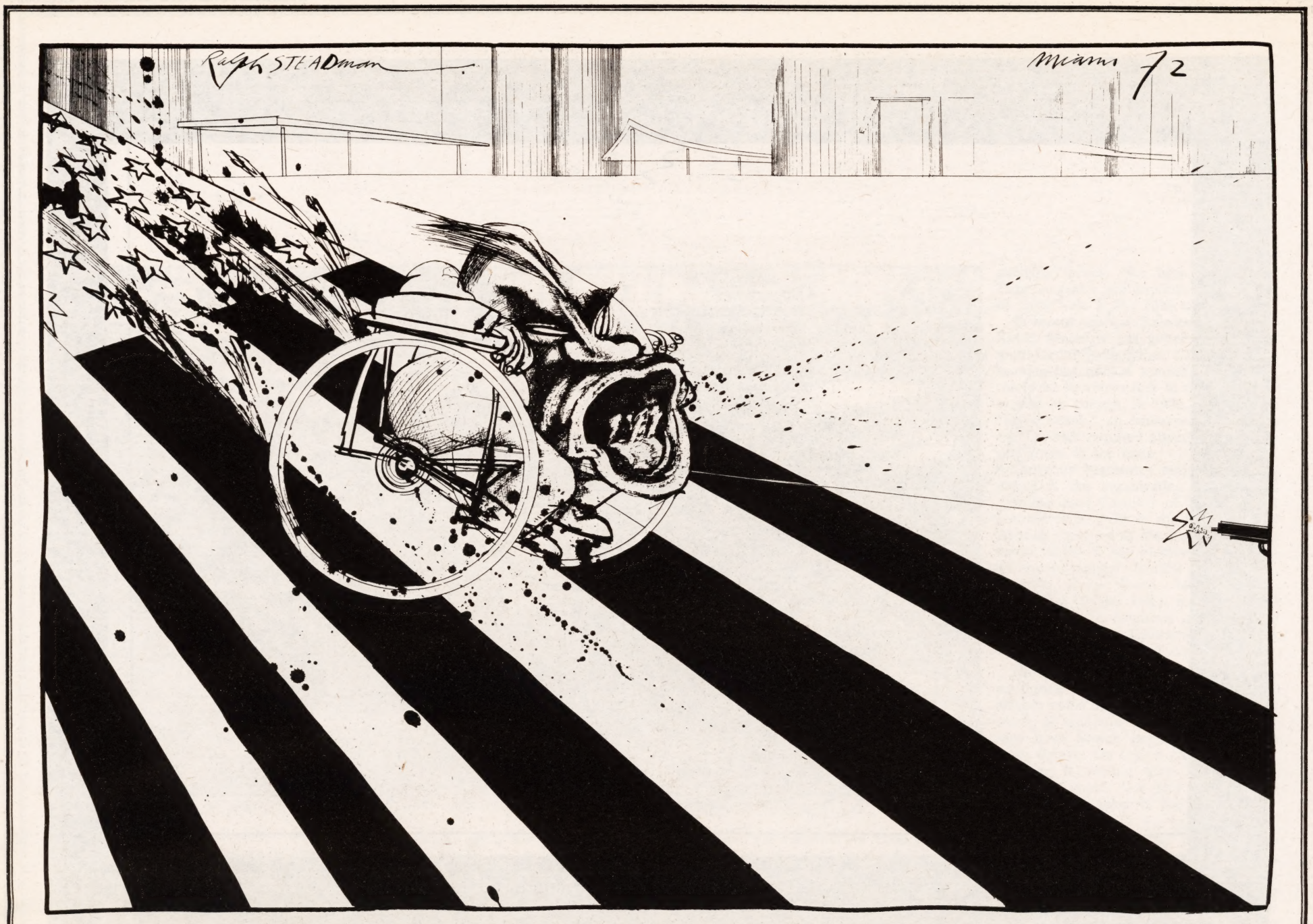
Stearns: I've never been as exhausted as I was.

Dougherty: I was going home yesterday. I'm not going home till Sunday, 'cause I couldn't get to the airport. No shit. I got down Wednesday, I think it was or something, and I don't think I ever sat down until yesterday, 'cause I was working hotels.

Stearns: Two hours of sleep in three days.

HST: This had been the least fun to me of all the things since I've been on this trip. It seems like it would have been at least . . . this is the first time I've been on the beach.

You worked with Bill on the Monday night floor fight through your incredible trailer/boiler room/delegation phone system.



Stearns: Gary Hart and I came down in May to talk to Southern Bell and outline the communications equipment we wanted for the Convention. See, we ran a two-tier operation. We had 250 whips on the floor, people we'd selected from each delegation to make sure that somebody was talking to the individual delegate. We had one person in every row of the Convention giving instructions somewhere. Then we had our floor leaders, Bill, Pierre Salinger and so on and then our delegation chairman. We had two ways to get to them. We had a boiler room here at the hotel, which was plugged into the SCOPE system. You'd call in at whip level.

HST: Which color phone did that come into?

Dougherty: White.

HST: And you had a different color. A red phone?

Dougherty: Blue phone.

Stearns: We had a blue phone for the floor leaders and delegation chairman.

HST: Who was there in the boiler room at the hotel?

Stearns: There were ten people. The western director was Barbara McKenzie. Doug Coulter did the Mountain States. Judy Harrington did the Plains states. Scott Lilly did the Central States, Illinois, Missouri, Kentucky. Gail Channing did Ohio and Michigan. Laura Mizelle did the Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware area. Tony Babb did the NY delegation, Puerto Rico; and Alan Kriegle did the New England states. They were in charge of the whips who were on the floor. They had worked for over a year in Washington as the liaison with regional areas of the campaign, handling the detail work, running to the delegates and the group we had in the trailer were the best of our field organizers.

HST: Were the hotel boiler room phones wired right to the floor, or into the trailer?

Stearns: Right to the floor . . . I had a point-to-point line between them and me. Then that red phone in the office, I'd pick that up and it rang automatically at the hotel.

Dougherty: We on the floor could get either place.

HST: Was it completely triangular?

Stearns: Oh no. We oversaw a full communication system. You could go anywhere with the communications we had.

HST: There wasn't one main nexus where everything had to go through?

Stearns: There was a switchboard here at the Doral. The way instructions went out is that I would stand up in the back of the trailer and shout "NO" and then pick up that red phone which would ring automatically here and someone would pick it up and I'd say "NO" and then everyone knew that they were to instruct everyone to vote no on that. That way you had two trys at making sure the instructions got through.

Dougherty: David Shumacher of CBS has a film of you in the trailer with a cigar in your mouth shouting "NO." They're gonna run it Sunday night.

Stearns: When will it be on?

Dougherty: I think *Sixty Minutes*. He said you got a cigar in your mouth. He said, "Boy, Dougherty, does this spoil the grass-roots flavor of your campaign." Of course, Shumacher just loves it.

HST: Let's get back. You came down in May to set up your communications.

Stearns: We had to protect the communications system in the trailer and the communications system in the hotel, so we traced the telephone lines and there were two points where it was vulnerable. In the Convention center it was behind five link fences and pretty well guarded; but you had open manhole covers. The telephone lines here are laid very close to the surface—it's an artificial peninsula and you hit water if you dig any deeper than 12 feet—so anyone who could open a manhole cover could get to any of the telephone lines . . .

HST: If they knew where they were.

Stearns: If you knew where they were. But chances are any manhole cover you pick up in this city you're gonna find telephone lines laid under it. We pointed that out to Southern Bell, and they suggested that we weld the manhole covers down, which we agreed to. The only other vulnerable point was in the hotel itself. There is a switching room at the backside of the hotel behind the room where all the press equipment was set up. That was the other vulnerable spot. So we had an armed guard placed on that. A guy with an axe could have demolished that communications system in 30 seconds.

Dougherty: You can do some of those things at a Convention, 'cause everybody forgets about it five days after it happens. Once the vote goes in, they don't recall any situation where even the crookedest of things may have changed it. There's no protest. There have been terrible things that happen at Conventions.

HST: Yeah, I'm surprised this thing went off as well as it did. You got a gang of real scum, the kind of people Barkan [AFL-CIO] and those people could have brought in. Between Daley and Barkan they could have brought . . .

Stearns: Well, they did. They brought them in, but we beat them . . .

HST: I mean people with axes—that kind of thing.

Stearns: Oh, yeah, they wouldn't have hesitated if they'd had the chance.

Dougherty: I'll tell you, one of the things we had going for us: You know how tough it is to keep communications going in one camp? The Stop McGovern movement had to keep communications going in *four* camps—try to coordinate all the communications of four camps.

We could have won the South Carolina Challenge if we were absolutely sure of every vote. We were getting votes out of places like Minnesota that we never expected. But we had Ohio waiting with a delegation that Humphrey . . . I mean they had 80 or 90 votes with which they could have done the same thing we did.

HST: Was that Humphrey's accordian delegation — Ohio?

Stearns: Yes. With the 80 or 90 Humphrey delegates, Frank King could have sat up and read any set of figures he wanted. We had a few delegations like that, too, as you saw in the last moments of that challenge.

HST: Oh yeah, but I forget which ones. . .

Stearns: Colorado, Wisconsin, Nebraska, Rhode Island. In the last seven or eight minutes of that challenge we didn't even bother to poll the delegations; I was just reading the numbers that we expected them to cast. That was the best moment of the Convention: when [ex-Governor of Nebraska] Frank Morrison's first instructions were to cut that vote down to 14 and then Bill came rushing up the aisle to take four more.

Dougherty: No, it was 17, and then I changed it to 14. I was whispering right in his ear. They got a shot of that on TV, I guess.

Stearns: I heard.

HST: Was the Humphrey guy next to you? When you came up to Morrison, was there somebody there who knew what you were saying to him?

Dougherty: Johnny Apple [New York Times reporter] caught me.

HST: Kirby [Jones, McGovern press assistant] said that King was aware that one of your people was on him.

Dougherty: Oh, they were aware of it on the floor.

Stearns: That was Dick Sklar standing next to King. He was our liaison for the Ohio delegation. He and Frank King did not get along.

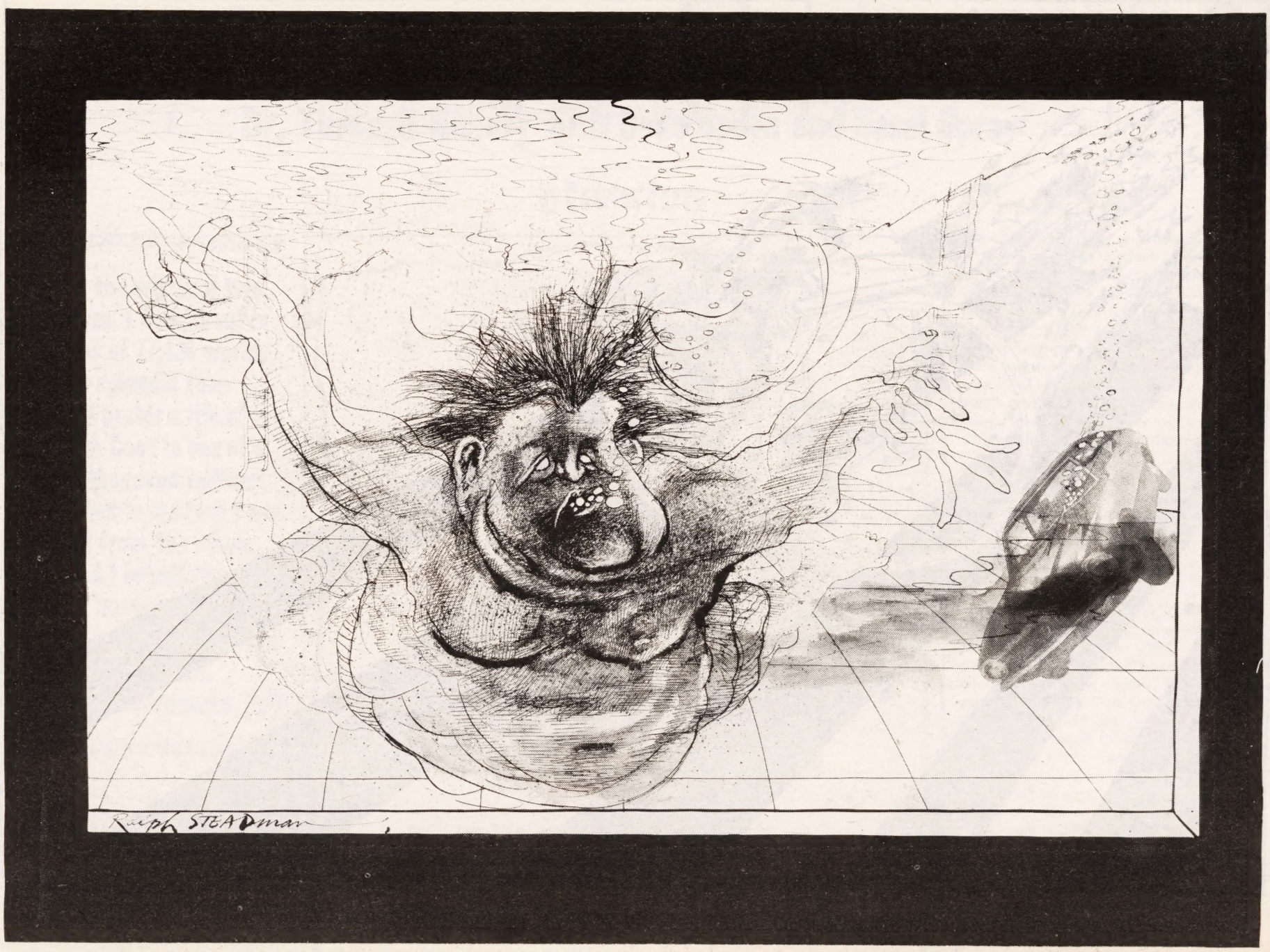
Dougherty: That South Carolina deal with me, who loves politics, and this is my third Convention, it was so great . . .

HST: It strikes me as being the key thing.

Stearns: Bill can describe it—I mean, I can describe what it was like sitting in the trailer—but Bill can describe it working on the floor.

Dougherty: Oh, this is perfect. When I got the word to shave, I had about ten minutes. I couldn't go to the other side after the first night, 'cause I damn near got in a fist fight with the governor. See, he moved in—you know he moved in a couple of alternates on us, and I wouldn't let him do it. And, God, he got madder 'n hell and he never spoke to me the rest of the Convention. So I had to go way over to the other side because I couldn't use that girl, 'cause she was sittin' right next to the Governor, and I had to lean over him to talk to her. And he was ready to punch me every time I leaned over.

So I ran clear out the other side and got ahold of him then I came back around and got ahold of Mondragon and Ortez, or whatever his name is. Then I told him I wanted to get as



many votes as I could get and it wasn't very many.

HST: When did you suddenly decide to start shaving?

Dougherty: Oh, Kansas was the key.

Stearns: Yeah, we pared it down to Kansas and then made the decision at that point that we were not going to win with a working majority of our own.

HST: How far along was that?

Stearns: That was the 11th or 12th vote.

Dougherty: But see, you didn't know because Ohio would pass.

Stearns: Ohio would pass, is what screwed us up. So I had to wait for another four or five votes. We had New York pass.

HST: What number was Ohio?

Stearns: Ohio was, I think, 11.

Dougherty: Kansas was 11, wasn't it?

Stearns: That's right, Kansas.

Dougherty: Frank King, with his Ohio delegation, has passed on every roll call since . . .

HST: It's sort of a political habit. You always want to have that leverage at the end, I suppose.

Dougherty: In the legislature you get the same thing, you get guys who pass all the time and wait to see how the vote is.

Stearns: But, the question was whether we would throw New York's votes behind the challenge or hold New York out, but when they held out Ohio, I gave instructions to our New York delegates to pass the first time.

HST: That gave you a helluva cushion, right?

Stearns: Yeah, there was a lot to work with there.

Dougherty: Then we started shaving.

Stearns: Then we heard a few more votes just to get a better sense of where things were going, and then the instructions went out to start cutting.

Dougherty: See, we were afraid the Humphrey forces were gonna start going the other way, which, if they were really coordinated, they could have done.

HST: Yeah. Well, wait a minute. What would have happened then?

Stearns: The game that was going on was to see who could push who over the 1509 mark first. If they'd pushed us up above 1509 with a lot of bogus votes, it would have been very hard to persuade our people to cut back then, 'cause it you think you've won, then the instinct is to go out and fight for every vote you can get your hands on. We tried to hold the obvious switches to the end. We started cutting votes at that point—hold the obvious ones to the end and suddenly throw a lot of votes on them, push them up over 1509, and then at that point the only way they can get out from under that is by abandoning one of their own. Governor West of South Carolina. They would have thrown him to the wolves at that point.

HST: What do you mean by them? You people have been around longer than I have. What do you mean—exactly what would they have done to Governor West?

Dougherty: Well, they'd have to abandon him to the South Carolina challenge by changing their vote.

Stearns: Once they'd gone over 1509, they had seated Governor West's delegation.

Dougherty: So to get back down under, they had to abandon him.

Stearns: When it really came down to it, they had less guts than we had. We were willing to sell out the women, but they weren't willing to sell out a Southern governor.

HST: When did King figure it out?

Stearns: Well, I think we were ahead of them almost from the beginning. It turned out our strategy confused them almost as much as it may have confused our own supporters.

HST: Johnson in the Post said it confused Jack Chestnut [Humphrey's floor manager]. Johnson said the Humphrey people bought it completely as they were sitting there with Humphrey watching it on TV.

Stearns: Oh, they did. His aides interpreted it as a great victory. What confused them was the fact that we went out to win it at the beginning. They've been reading the columnists for a month about undisciplined, unruly McGovern delegates, and I think once they saw us start to win the South Carolina challenge, I think they relaxed. That was just what they wanted us to do. We needed to set out to win for some political reasons because we couldn't sell out the women completely. If there was a chance to win it, then we had the obligation to try and win.

Dougherty: What did Chestnut say to Humphrey?

Stearns: He said, "We've given a great setback to McGovern." But Humphrey was smarter: Humphrey said, "No, they ran that deliberately . . . "

HST: Yeah, Humphrey said, "They're pulling it back." There was a TV pool reporter with him at the hotel. I was watching Humphrey's face, and, Jesus, it just turned to wax. He looked the worst I've ever seen him—which makes me very happy, that son of a bitch. He should be buried with his head down in the sand. I've never been so disgusted with a human being in politics.

Dougherty: One thing, Humphrey isn't dumb. He's got a bunch of dumb guys around him.

Stearns: He's smart—he's been around a long time. He was the only one of that group who knew what was going on.

HST: According to Johnson, they thought they had it locked up until about halfway through — then all of a sudden they realized . . .

Stearns: Yeah, but we really did try to win at first, and I think they relaxed then. But with Ohio coming in, we had 30 bogus votes from Minnesota on that total. Maybe a few others—I have to go over the totals again—but Minnesota was what I caught, and then we had Ohio holding out to the end.

Stearns: King passed twice to make sure that his was the last vote that was cast. At that point I was trying to cut our total down to the point where no matter how he cast those votes, no matter how or what they did with those Ohio votes, there was no way they could push us into that area.

HST: So you just wanted to get as low as you could, once you decided to go down?

Stearns: Well, I didn't want to go as low as I could. I wanted a good vote for women's challenge, but I wanted it just low enough that there was nothing King could do to re-write it.

HST: So it had to be almost 80 votes low.

Stearns: Yeah, I think we came in at about 1420 or 1430. And we were prepared to go lower. The number that I was aiming to get us down to was about 1410 and we had those lined up, but as we started taking the votes off, finally King gave up and went ahead and cast his vote. I think we cut it down to the figure where King couldn't win, and I think he realized that.

HST: When you say dropping it down, now, you mean changes?

Dougherty: When we had time, we shaved them and shaved again.

Stearns: Yeah, we cut them as they were cast and we were ready to change them after.

HST: Did you have to go back and do it? I've forgotten.

Stearns: A few of them, we did. We went back to Wisconsin. Wisconsin originally came through at 54, then we cut it down to 37. Oregon came through at 33 and we cut it down to 17 or whatever the figure was. I had Rhode Island ready to, I mean, they would have moved all 22 votes . . .

HST: You were hung between 1410 and a possible 1500?

Stearns: What I was aiming for was the figure at which Ohio could not have made a difference.

HST: Yeah, but the most you could have gotten—if you hadn't had that option of losing, when you saw you might not win—you think it was about 1500?

Stearns: Well, my feeling was that on the issue of the challenge itself, we were stuck at around 1500. That was clear from the beginning, and it would have been disastrous. To keep them from playing with the vote, we had to show them that we had the discipline on the floor, that there was nothing they could do at that point.

Dougherty: But it got tougher to hold that discipline as it went along.

HST: What Gary Hart was quoted as

How the Hump Went Down

BY TIMOTHY CROUSE

MIAMI BEACH — Hubert Horatio Humphrey went down for the third time in Miami Beach. He will never again dream of the Presidency.

Just before noon on Tuesday, July 11th, Humphrey walked into a small, packed function room on the third floor of the Carillion Hotel to tell his faithful that he was withdrawing. He could not bring himself to put it in so many words. Instead he alluded to the blue campaign brochure, entitled "Tomorrow is the first day of the rest of our lives," which contained a brief chapter on each of his programs.

"Every word in that book is true," said Humphrey. "Last night I came to the conclusion that we ought to write another chapter. We're not dropping out, we're just going to play another role."

The speech was closed to the press, but an eyewitness reported that Humphrey workers wept and exchanged consoling hugs. From down the hall I could hear the long ovation they gave Humphrey.

The Press had been waiting impatiently for Humphrey for over an hour in Carillion's El Dorado Room, one of Miami's more modest stabs at the Old World. The low ceiling was made of stucco, laced with real wooden beams, but in between the beams sat large plastic light fixtures. There was Formica panelling on the walls, and a Formica podium backed with a fake blue silk arras.

In the front row, Sam Donaldson of ABC mumbled something about it being "the last day of the longest running funeral" he'd ever seen. A Chicago reporter not far away looked up with a stricken face, "Ya don't suppose he's gonna tell us he'll be back in '76?" he asks. "No," said an old pot-bellied photographer. "Don't worry, in a few minutes a booming organ will roll into 'Hearts and Flowers' and that will be that.'"

The Press did not actually hate Humphrey, it was more that they felt sorry for him, and since they don't like to feel sorry for anyone, they wished that he would hurry up and go away. The consensus-phrase that almost all reporters used privately to describe Humphrey after California was "tragic figure," by which they meant, I think, that he had become irredeemably pathetic and crazy — that reality, not to mention any sense of the "mood of the country," was drifting further and further away from Humphrey's desperate grasp. "The Hump," said a reporter who had once respected the Senator from Minnesota, "is like a crazy old whore who thinks she's in love every time she does the trick." Whatever expediency, good advice, bad advice or George Meany obliged Humphrey to say, he said with a lunatic conviction. He believed his own lies.

"Humphrey turned me off permanently a few months ago in Wisconsin," said another reporter. "He was doing an early morning radio talk show somewhere way the hell up north around Eau Claire and a teenage girl called in to say that she thought that the US should withdraw immediately from Vietnam, stop all bombing and cut off all aid and support to Thieu. Humphrey lit up and said, 'That's my position exactly!' Well, that just about knocked me on my ass, so on the way back I sat next to him on the plane and I said, 'Now let me get this straight, you're for all these things?' And he said, in that bright-eyed way he has, 'Certainly, as long as we can guarantee the freedom and independence of South Vietnam!' I just got up and took another seat." "But I'll say one thing for the man," said the same journalist. "He was not a politician who would talk to a bunch of Italians and then get back on the campaign plane and start telling jokes about the wops. I never saw him do that once. Not once."

In the wake of the California returns, an inner voice told Humphrey that he was belly up, but a stronger voice bade him consult with people who would talk him back into the race. He flew to see the Southern Governors in Houston, he made a radio call to George Meany on the QE 2, he got himself urged to keep going and then settled down to make an ugly nuisance of himself for the next month.

The politician in him kept twitching like a snake that continues to bite after it is dead. One afternoon in Miami, he was pressing flesh in the Humphrey Press Room when he ran into Ron Rosenbaum of the Village Voice, who had written a short and sarcastic piece about Humphrey's favorite sandwich, a promiscuous three-decker that contained both catsup and peanut butter. When Humphrey spotted Rosenbaum, his circular political file began to whir, the card popped out, he connected: Rosenbaum . . . Voice . . . Sandwich piece. He grabbed young Rosenbaum's hand, expressed delight in the article, and chided the author for leaving out a couple of ingredients.

Having pushed through the "California challenge" in Washington, Humphrey and his labor cronies pulled out everything against McGovern in Miami. Al Barkan, George Meany's chief henchman, who has the looks and instincts of a hammerhead shark, darted up and down the Beach putting the squeeze on the 356 labor delegates. Meanwhile Humphrey went after blacks and women. Shirley Chisholm took the Black Caucus by storm, telling the blacks: "You didn't come here to be delivered" (to George McGovern). Humphrey immediately announced that he was releasing his black delegates to Chisholm, so the they could show their solidarity and independence by voting for a black on the first ballot. It was an opportunistic gesture — Humphrey hoped that McGovern's black delegates would bolt and vote for Shirley too — but as he spoke, Humphrey convinced himself he was Marcus Garvey.

The next day at the Women's Caucus, he began by listing his accomplishments in behalf of women, got cranked up, raised his voice, nodded at his own best points, raised his fist, and climaxed by convincing himself that he, not George McGovern, had reformed the Democratic party. "This convention will have 38 percent participation [of women] and it is yet short of the mark of what it ought to have!" Humphrey said defiantly. "And I am going to do my best to see that this reform movement continues . . ."

Humphrey gave no indication of knowing the score until early Tuesday morning. Late Monday night (the first of the Convention), he repaired to his quarters at the Shelbourne Hotel (provided by the Communications Workers of America Union), and did not reappear in the public eye until a television camera, set up in his room, caught him watching the crucial South Carolina challenge vote. He looked as if he had just flown in from Mme. Tussauds' — sick, sweating, a ghastly smile pasted on his face, he seemed to be propped up by some sort of hospital device. When the TV camera was turned off, he reportedly moved to the end of his bed and leaned towards the TV, as if to block out the rest of the world. As the McGovern forces began to "lose" the South Carolina vote, Humphrey's old Senate aide Bill Connell announced that it was a Humphrey victory.

"No," said Humphrey, who knew every trick in the book, including the one the McGovern heavies were employing at that moment, "they're drawing it down." He knew he was finished. Around 3:30 that morning he called George McGovern, waking him up, and congratulated him. The next morning, still in his salmon-colored pajamas, he met with eight of his staffers. "He didn't come to tell us he was getting out," said one of them. "He came to review with us what his judgment was." According to one report, Humphrey bitterly looked over a list of McGovern backers whom he had helped in years past — Jesse Jackson, Leonard Woodcock, Walter Fauntroy among others. "We should be able to win *him* over," he kept saying. "That shouldn't be hard." Finally, he resigned himself to defeat and started dictating his concession speech to his secretary.

When Humphrey arrived at last to meet the Press, his cheeks looked hollow, he was pale under his tan, and his eyes, which had sparkled the day before for the Women's Caucus, had gone dead. A handful of supporters in the back of the room applauded long and hard, but the Press sat on its hands. His voice had lost its vox humana ring, but it actually cracked only once, when he said he had "played by the rules."

In '68, Humphrey had conceded with a neat little three minute speech, only to blather on for another 40 minutes when he ran out of prepared text. This time he sewed up his concession in under five minutes, and caressed Muriel, who was on the brink of tears. It was the most dignified, moving and credible moment in Humphrey's campaign.

Back in the press room, where cartons of Humphrey handouts were still stacked up against the walls, John Dancy, the NBC correspondent, walked up to a friend and said, "You know what I did this morning? I picked up a HHH button. Because those things have a way of disappearing immediately after a campaign."

saying was that you couldn't afford to let them know you had control of the floor. Is that right?

Stearns: No, I think it's just the opposite. We wanted them to think that we had the control. Otherwise we would have been shifting votes all night.

HST: How long did that fencing with King go on? Did he fuck you up at any time?

Stearns: No, that was their one attempt at that.

HST: All he did was pass twice?

Stearns: No, Ohio passed three times, but I think they realized the fourth time they came around that it was hopeless. They knew we had control.

HST: He didn't really make any moves except passing.

Stearns: He kept passing. His strategy was to have Ohio cast their votes last so they could manipulate the Ohio votes in a way that would have thrown us into the procedural test.

Dougherty: We had some hard votes in Ohio, too—ones they couldn't move.

Stearns: Right, they couldn't move our Ohio votes, and as we begun cutting that figure down, we finally got to the point where they realized we'd cut i down to zero if we had to.

HST: So his thing was mainly just waiting.

Stearns: To wait until the truth began to dawn on them, that we controlled the votes on the floor.

Dougherty: What we couldn't afford—hell, it became so obvious—we didn't want to get the women mad at us.

Stearns: Bill's point is very good: it got harder as you went along because the more that vote was pushed to 1509, the more our delegates wanted to go majority. That's just what the Humphrey coalition was trying to lure us into, tyring to go all out to win the thing, win it with their votes which could have been pulled out from under us, and at that point psychologically to get our supporters to change would have almost been impossible.

Dougherty: I was getting nervous, myself.

Stearns: I know, I was getting the calls back, but . . .

Dougherty: The delegates were all bitchin' at me. And I was pissed off.

HST: Why?

Dougherty: I was so worried about our delegates gettin' pissed off, 'cause they're all such a great bunch of non-political professionals. I thought, "Ooh shit!" 'Cause, jeez, they got mad at me when I started shaving votes on some of those delegations. You know, "What are you trying to do?" and all that . . . I didn't have time to explain it. I just had to be hard and say, "Goddamn it! That's the way it's gonna be!"

HST: You mean the delegates themselves didn't know what was going on?

Dougherty: No! Shit, they weren't aware.

Stearns: Well, our whips knew. I held a briefing session with them on Monday, and I spent an hour and a half going over the possible parliamentary contingencies.

Dougherty: But the average delegate didn't know.

Stearns: There were perhaps 250 people on the floor who had a good idea of what was going on. There were another 50 or 60 who had a pretty *complete* idea of what was going on. And then there were about 20 who *knew* what was going on.

HST: Did state-level leaders like Diane White or Dick Perchlick in the Colorado delegation know what was happening?

Stearns: No.

HST: That's amazing. Amazing you could do it. It must have been hell on the floor.

Stearns: It was. That one woman in Nebraska got so damn mad. Oh God, she was mad! But after they saw what it led to in the California vote, then we had a couple of days where we could say almost anything and people realized that we weren't trying to . . .

Dougherty: That's when they learned discipline.

HST: Well, Jesus. It was really a helluva gamble then, wasn't it, given the kind of delegates that were there.

Stearns: Yeah, but you had to take it. We had a nomination at stake.

HST: What was the point then in sending Mankiewicz and Salinger and Hart out to call it a terrible defeat on the floor? After it was over—not before, but after.

Dougherty: Well, on account of the women.

Stearns: We sure didn't want to get the women angry for us on the California challenge.

Dougherty: The women didn't catch on, though. They still haven't. It's so complicated that they haven't figured it out.

Stearns: I felt sort of guilty about what we'd done to the Women's Caucus. Afterwards I went around the trailer saying how bad I felt that we'd done it, but . . .

HST: What was the long-range effect of that, anyway? Was it just a symbolic thing that you'd done?

Dougherty: McGovern never did have that women's meeting yesterday. You know the Women's Caucus called me up and I was in bed. I just hung up. I said, "I can't help it," and I hung up.

Stearns: They called me at 7:30 in the morning after I'd just gone to bed, and my response was, "If you really have to meet with him, I'll arrange it, but the fact that you want to meet with him at 10:00 when the Democratic National Committee is going to convene and elect its first woman chairman in the history of the party shows us how wrong you've been all along, all you're interested in is the form, not the substance. The substance is going to happen over at the National Committee meeting and if you want to do something meaningful, you should go there at 10:00." So whoever it was hung up. Maybe they went to the committee meeting. Silly. I mean, they want to meet with McGovern while they're electing their first woman national chairman of the party.

Dougherty: The one that was raisin' all the hell was the delegate from South Dakota.

Stearns: She caught me about 7:00 in the coffee shop as I was finally getting breakfast.

Dougherty: You know what she's done for the Democrats? Nothin', ever. For George McGovern or anything. I really chewed her out on the floor. I said, "Instead of going around startin' all this trouble, you should be goin' around puttin' out the fires."

HST: What was the loss they had? What did the women suffer?

Dougherty: That wasn't what they complained about. They were complaining there wasn't enough input from women in the campaign.

HST: Was there any permanent damage done? Or tangible damage?

Dougherty: No, I don't think so.

HST: The networks must have caught on at some point. I remember I went somewhere and came back and saw Mike Wallace saying what a brilliant move it had been.

Dougherty: I went back to that airlines lounge in the hall, and watched TV a little bit and had coffee after I finished all that sweatin'. And Cronkite is on there saying that McGovern forces have suffered a serious setback and all of a sudden they switched him to the Doral Hotel. There's David Shumacher who says, "Well, I'm sorry Walter, maybe they suffered a serious defeat, but when they lost, everybody in the boiler room cheered."

HST: That probably will go down in the annals of political history.

Stearns: It was the greatest moment in my political career. I'd say I've spent four years studying for the ten minutes on that vote, being able to make the right decision in that circumstance. Learning the names of all those delegates, how they'd been chosen, how the whole thing was put together, what the parliamentary situation might be.

HST: What are the most obvious things that could have gone wrong? In your place, on the floor, or at the Doral boiler room?

Stearns: Well, the most obvious thing that could have gone wrong was if we'd lost control of the Convention. The other issue at stake on that South Carolina vote was whether or not we could control our own delegates and whether we could impose the discipline that was going to lead to a working majority that could nominate George McGovern.

HST: Without them even knowing what you were doing.

Stearns: That was the whole question the press was raising right before the Convention. The Humphrey campaign had all this fantastic strategy about how McGovern supporters, because they were ideologically inclined to proportional representation, would desert us on the California issue and then they'd cut us apart from the black caucus by releasing delegates to Chisholm and the women would come running at us in another direction. So the question was whether we could keep control, and that was the most important thing that could have gone wrong, just a complete inability . . .

HST: What would have been the first manifestation?

Stearns: Well, South Carolina . . .

HST: No, I mean, even while it was going on. If somebody just stood up and told you to fuck off and "What's wrong with you . . ."

BY TIMOTHY FERRIS

MIAMI BEACH — Groovy street people found plenty to see and do during the convention. Demonstrations, workshops, sit-ins and dope smoking made for 'round-the-clock fun.

Especially dope smoking, which usually managed to gather a crowd of tourists whenever anybody fired up a joint in Flamingo Park, the area which the City Council, after a lot of bluffing, had set aside for "non-delegates." The tourists often outnumbered the 2000 or so non-delegates, and when joints were passed, some allowed themselves to be persuaded to join in.

One elderly lady took a hit. "Ethel, let's go," said her friend. "Margaret is waiting for us."

"Forget it," said Ethel.

So it was good times for young and old alike. Not so much for those in between, except for the Poor People's campaign and some middle-aged members of gay liberation groups. Jerry Rubin and Abbie Hoffman found themselves more or less expelled from the scene as senile; they contented themselves with working on their book. Just to show they still had what it takes, when they showed up at the convention hall they ran past the guards as if breaking in, even though they had valid press credentials. That was pretty exciting.

The heavy action of the week came Wednesday when members of SDS and the Zippies invaded the Doral Beach Hotel, George McGovern's headquarters, and sat down. The way this came about was an example of how spontaneous action based upon tribal consciousness can reap big results: Some SDS people went to the Doral just to demonstrate the hell off McGovern's ass. Some other SDS people were out prowling the streets hunting for Eiler Ravenholt.

Who was Eiler Ravenholt? A 49-year-old aide to Senator Daniel Inouye of Hawaii, loaned by Inouye to Hubert Humphrey. Nobody had ever heard of him until Tuesday, when his car struck and injured a 44-year-old black nurse named Dorothy Christian and he became an enemy of the people.

The police said Mrs. Christian had been jaywalking, and let Ravenholt go. SDS knew better: Ravenholt was a racist. If his victim had been Mrs. Rockefeller, SDS pointed out, he wouldn't have gotten off so easily. Mrs. Rockefeller would at least have received closer attention at the hospital, or a larger room, or more sympathy, or something. Anyway, whatever the details, everybody agreed that Mrs. Christian was not Mrs. Rockefeller.

Ravenholt was registered at the Carillion Hotel, but SDS is not an organization to take the easy road, so SDS people went looking for him at the Doral. There they found the other SDS members looking for McGovern. Reunited! A hundred or so strong, they sat down and began chanting things like, "One side's right, one side's wrong, We're on the side of the Viet-Cong." They had lots of chants and knew they could stay a long time.

Meanwhile, a couple of miles away, a local Zippie had an idea of his own. "Let's go to the Doral," he said. His compatriots brightened. They knew that McGovern was in his suite at the Doral, working on the acceptance speech he would deliver that night. They also knew he had recently said that as President, he might leave some residual troops near Vietnam long enough to insure that American POWs were released.

The Zippies knew this was another in a long series of moves to the Right by McGovern—"The straw that broke the camel's back," as Tom Forcade phrased it. To dramatize this very point, they had held a march through Miami Beach which consisted entirely of right turns. They had tossed an effigy of George Wallace, in a wheelchair, into a canal, and renamed a bridge in honor of Mary Jo Kopechne. The Zippies believe wit has a place in politics.

They marched into the Doral bearing a giant photo of Lyndon Johnson. It had been stolen from the convention hall days earlier and was a treasured standard, a big enough trophy to get the Zips mentioned on network TV. Whenever you saw it, you knew the Zippies meant business. A McGovern sticker had been plastered across Lyndon's forehead; the Zippies explained that this was because McGovern is just like Lyndon Johnson.

A bunch of state cops in full riot gear swarmed into the lobby, but McGovern's security chief asked them to leave and they swarmed back out again.

"Eat the Rich," the Zippies chanted in the marble lobby. "Eat the Rich." They yelled this at accelerating speed, finally dissolving into fearsome growls which must have been very frightening to any rich people in the vicinity.

The SDS demonstrators had moved over in front of the elevators, forcing the management to shut them off. This meant McGovern couldn't get room service; a premonition of revolution was in the air. The whole McGovern operation had been slowed down. A young black McGovern delegate, for example, had to carry her two tiny children and their bassinet down eight flights of stairs. SDS knew this was more than just another demonstration, they sent out for peanut butter and jelly sandwiches.

A copy of SDS's anti-racism bill was circulated for signatures. "No college or university, public or private school which employs officials who commit acts of racism against students, faculties or other employees, or which uses texts that propagate the view that black, latin, asian or native american people are culturally or genetically inferior, shall not receive any federal aid," it said in part. To the layman, the combination of "no" and "not" might appear to mean that all racist universities should get federal aid. This is because the layman lacks the sophisticated political training of top radical theoriticians.

Frank Mankiewicz, McGovern's campaign manager, borrowed a bullhorn to assure the demonstrators that Stewart Mott, a McGovern contributor, was not, as one demonstrator hollered repeatedly, "the chairman of the board of Chrysler Corporation." It's GM, Mankiewicz insisted, his devious liberal eyes shifting over the crowd, and it's Mott's *father*, not Mott. Few were taken in by this tactic.

Perseverance was rewarded, and after six or seven hours McGovern himself appeared in a blaze of TV lights.

"I know you have been here for a long time because there are things you feel very deeply about; I'm here to hear what you have to say," McGovern began. Nobody had much to say for a couple of minutes because SDS and the Zippies were arguing with each other over their bullhorns; a matter of priorities. Finally somebody asked McGovern about residual troops in Southeast Asia.

"I'm not shifting my position on any of the fundamental stands I've taken," he said. "I make a flat pledge that if I become the President of the United States, every American now involved in the war on the sea, and every bomber will quit flying. All American military aid to the Thieu government will cease, and I don't have the slightest doubt that within 90 days of my inauguration, every American troop and soldier will be home. That's the pledge I make."

A chorus of boos came from those who saw that this didn't answer the question, but they were drowned out by dupes who couldn't see that McGovern was just like Lyndon Johnson.

Further issues were brought to the fore. McGovern said he wouldn't sign the anti-racism bill — he was holding a copy in his hand — because it called for a federal law against cops killing members of minority groups but said nothing about cops killing whites. Marti Riefe of Boston, leading the SDS contingent, shouted that McGovern was misrepresenting the bill, which actually said, "especially" blacks and other minorities. McGovern protested; the "especially" didn't appear in his copy, or anybody else's except Marti's.

"This is the *latest edition!*" Marti yelled.

A Zippie argued that grass should be legalized, not just "decriminalized" as McGovern urges, because otherwise smokers are forced to buy underground where they are driven into the arms of heroin dealers.

"I have always been told," McGovern said, "that the use of marijuana did not lead to the use of hard drugs."

"No, no," shouted the Zippies. "Not true."

When McGovern had left and the demonstration was breaking up, Riefe made it clear that she, for one, had not been gulled by McGovern's rhetoric. "The fact that he would not sign the anti-racism bill," she said, "shows me that he is a racist."

Back in his room, McGovern said he saw the demonstration as "another reminder of the anger in this country."

"I thought that I might release some of that anger and some of the frustration by indicating that I'm a political figure who not only talks, but listens once in a while," he said.

The Doral showdown was not the only big action. On Monday night 3000 persons turned out for the week's largest demonstration. A small group split away and rushed an entrance to the hall. Fifty feet of chain link fence were torn down and three cops were slightly injured. This was the most fence ripped down and the most police hurt all week. It was the record.

Vietnam Veterans Against the War managed to hold independent demonstrations of their own despite the loss of many of their leaders, who had been made an offer they couldn't refuse — to appear before a federal grand jury in Tallahassee the day the convention began. It turned out to be the latest engagement of the Justice Department's long-running Great Conspiracy Show: soon seven VVAW members were in jail on charges of contempt of court and conspiring to strafe and firebomb stores in Miami.

VVAW said they had showed they could carry on without their leadership, but they were berated nonetheless by some demonstrators for being happy when the Democrats passed a resolution supporting them against the Justice Department. VVAW didn't seem to realize they were being tricked by the establishment; they thought they were being helped.

On the last night of the convention a few demonstrators managed to block the west gate to the hall for about an hour, but it was clear that the days of resolute struggle had taken their toll. Some of the revolutionary vanguard were so tired they were slack-jawed.

They were still agile about tactics. though. When a man with a bullhorn implored the group to go back to Flamingo Park, one slackjaw yelled, "No, man, let's stay here. *You* go back to the park."

A moment later someone else took the horn and said he thought they should stay.

"No, man," countered the same slackjaw. "Come on, let's go."

With all this street action needed to keep pressure on the Democrats, naturally a few other events went unnoticed. It's like that in a revolution.

So nobody showed up to protest at Miami Criminal Court building when Michael King, 16 years old, was sentenced to 15 year's hard labor for stealing $260 at age 14. With some friends, King had taken the money from a hardware store and run out into the arms of police, who set a German Shepherd on him. As he stood in court for sentencing, King, who is black, stared with embarrassment at his trouser legs because they were four inches short. "He outgrew everything while he was in jail," his mother explained.

People like King get put away all the time, of course. So no network TV crews, public figures or nationally-syndicated columnists showed up. No revolutionaries, either.

— Continued from Preceding Page

Stearns: If Bill had gone to Pat Lucy and said, "We want you to cut back to 37 on this" and Pat had turned around to his delegation and said, "I need 20 people to step forward and change their votes." And people said "Go to hell."

HST: And you didn't think that that could have happened?

Stearns: Oh yeah, it could have happened. But we had a bunch of delegates down here that wanted to win . . .

Dougherty: After Tuesday night though, they got . . .

Stearns: They got a little restless. I mean after Monday night, they were willing to follow us anywhere, because they realized what we'd done . . .

HST: On the Daley challenge they didn't. That was Monday night, wasn't it? What caused that? Why did some of them desert you on the Daley thing?

Stearns: You mean on the compromise? Our hard core supporters didn't desert us. We pulled exactly . . .

Dougherty: We needed a two-thirds vote from the whole convention on that one.

Stearns: We pulled exactly the vote of absolutely loyal supporters we had. The people who screwed us on that were the Humphrey and Muskie people who were still convinced that they were gonna win. We got Alderman Singer and Jesse Jackson to agree to publicly announce the compromise . . .

Dougherty: Let me tell you this story. I was on the floor with John Bailey [Chairman of the Connecticut delegation, and past Chairman of the Democratic National Committee] right when Frank Morrison had the deal in his hand to give it.

See, you could divide that motion in two, parliamentari-wise, and I asked Bailey to give it, to make the motion to suspend the rules. If Bailey made the motion for two-thirds to suspend the rules, I think it would have passed. Then I'd have Frank Morrison make the motion to seat both delegations and it only takes a majority to do that.

HST: So if you separated the two motions, you could have got it.

Dougherty: See, if John Bailey had made the motion to suspend the rules . . . I wanted to divide the question: have John Bailey make the motion to suspend the rules, then have Frank Morrison make the motion to have the compromise, and it only would have taken a majority on the compromise,see. And we could let some of our people vote the other way and we still could have won it.

HST: Why didn't Bailey make it?

Dougherty: I was talking to him right on the phone while we were gettin' ready to do it. I was right there on Frank Morrison's phone, and he says, "I won't do it, because the Mayor [Daley] hasn't agreed to it."

And I says, "This is the only chance, John, this is the only chance we've got, otherwise we're gonna kick him right out of the Convention." I pleaded with him, I said to him, "For the good of the Democratic party." And he wouldn't do it.

Stearns: The Humphrey coalition's last hope at that point was that we would be willing to sell out Singer and Jackson, who came through for us and did everything we asked them to do on that California vote and on the compromise.

HST: Why did Singer and Jackson go for the compromise? Were they just thinking about carrying Illinois in November?

Stearns: They're politicians.

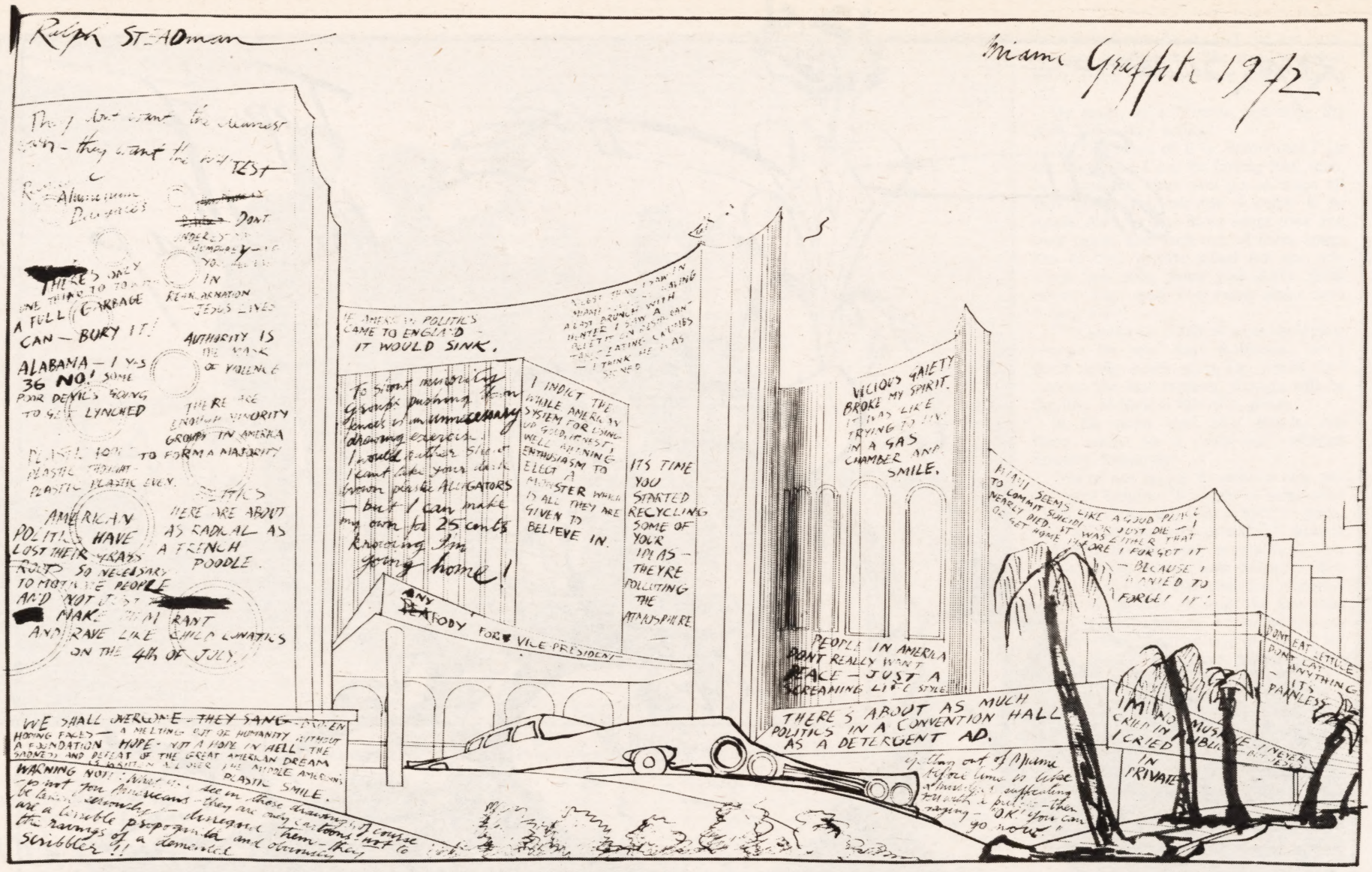
Dougherty: You remember me on the floor. I was mad, because I thought those guys, Jackson and Singer, wouldn't support it either, but they did! See, that just killed any chance Daley had of being seated.

Stearns: That's when I decided to go all out for Jackson. When they kept their word on that, then that's fine with me—we'd keep our word, too.

Dougherty: I'll tell you this. I wanted Daley in that Convention so bad I could taste it.

Stearns: He should have been there.

Dougherty: There's a legal question on it, too. I mean those guys, the Jack-


Ralph STEADman
Miami Graffiti 1972
THERE'S ONLY ONE THING TO DO WITH A FULL GARBAGE CAN — BURY IT!
ALABAMA — I YES 36 NO! SOME POOR DEVILS GOING TO GET LYNCHED
AMERICAN POLITICS HAVE LOST THEIR YEASTY ROOT SO NECESSARY TO MOBILIZE PEOPLE AND NOT JUST
AND RAVE LIKE CHILD LUNATICS ON THE 4th OF JULY.
DON'T UNDERSTAND HUMPHREY — YOU LIE IN REINCARNATION JESUS LIVED
AUTHORITY IS THE MARK OF VIOLENCE
THERE ARE ENOUGH MINORITY GROUPS IN AMERICA TO FORM A MAJORITY
PLASTIC IDOL PLASTIC THOUGHT PLASTIC PLASTIC EVERY.
POLITICS HERE ARE ABOUT AS RADICAL AS A FRENCH POODLE.
IF AMERICAN POLITICS CAME TO ENGLAND — IT WOULD SINK.
I INDICT THE WHILE AMERICAN SYSTEM FOR LONG-WELL RUNNING ENTHUSIASM TO ELECT A MONSTER WHICH IS ALL THEY ARE GIVEN TO BELIEVE IN.
IT'S TIME YOU STARTED RECYCLING SOME OF YOUR IDEAS — THEY'RE POLLUTING THE ATMOSPHERE
ANY BODY FOR VICE PRESIDENT
VICIOUS GAIETY BROKE MY SPIRIT. IT WAS LIKE TRYING TO LIVE IN A GAS CHAMBER AND SMILE.
PEOPLE IN AMERICA DON'T REALLY WANT PEACE — JUST A SCREAMING LIFE STYLE
THERE'S ABOUT AS MUCH POLITICS IN A CONVENTION HALL AS A DETERGENT AD.
I'M NO CHILD IN PUBLIC I CRIED IN PRIVATE
DON'T EAT LETTUCE DON'T EAT ANYTHING IT'S PAINLESS
WE SHALL OVERCOME - THEY SANG - BROKEN HOPING FACES — A MELTING OUT OF HUMANITY WITHOUT A FOUNDATION HOPE - NOT A HOPE IN HELL - THE SADNESS AND DEFEAT OF THE GREAT AMERICAN DREAM
WARNING NOTE: Those of you who see in these drawings only cartoons, NOT to be taken seriously — they are only caricatures, not a literate propaganda and obnoxious ravings of a demented Scribbler !!
BLASTIC SMILE.

son delegation, weren't exactly legally seated, if you really want to be honest about it. I guess they were on the reform rules, but there was nobody running against them.

Stearns: I agree. The Daley side had a good argument. The Jackson side had a good argument, and the compromise would have settled the whole thing.

The problem at that point was to convince the Humphrey coalition that the compromise was the only way they were going to keep Daley in the Convention. But they wouldn't believe us. Their last hope was that we would not keep that agreement, that we would sell out Singer and Jackson, so that then they could have come back on the majority report, and at that point carry a disaffected Illinois delegation, because whether Daley had been seated or not, at that point the Singer-Jackson delegation would have gone on voting until a majority report had passed.

HST: I don't follow that.

Stearns: Temporary rule votes until you get all through the credential challenges. That is, those 151 unseated delegates from California went on voting right to the end of the evening until the majority report was passed. The same was true of Illinois: the Singer-Jackson delegation would have voted right to the end, regardless of whether Daley had been seated or not. The last hope the Humphrey people had was that we would desert Jackson, that is betray our word on that agreement, and then be able to use that Illinois delegation plus the 151 votes from California to defeat the passage of the majority report on credentials, which would have put us right back at the beginning again. But we kept our word.

HST: I didn't know that. Even the people who had been unseated could vote on the final passage.

Stearns: They would vote on the passage of the final report. And if we did not keep our word—if Jackson had been unseated—he might be angry enough to go out and by that point we would have also offended the women, and would have offended the blacks, and then they could have put together enough of a vote to defeat the passage of the majority report. But by the time we finished that night, they were so demoralized that they just let it go through on a voice vote. They lost their appetite to fight. On the next morning, Muskie and Humphrey were through.

HST: According to the Haynes Johnson story, they pretty well gave up at the end of the South Carolina roll call. They knew it.

Stearns: It was obvious. But even as late as the nomination roll call, I had an AFL-CIO guy come up to me and tell me that we only had 1451 votes for the nomination. What he was telling me was my *own* figure, from our absolutely hard count on the California thing, not realizing we just seated 151 delegates from California to take the total up to 1600.

HST: How important was O'Hara's ruling then? What accounts for the worry over O'Hara's ruling? And the tremendous spread that you got in the end? O'Hara's ruling wouldn't matter, it would appear.

Dougherty: Yeah, it would have. If he'd ruled different, we wouldn't . . . it kinda broke things, and we needed a break at that point.

Stearns: You not only deal with numbers at a Convention, you deal with psychology.

Dougherty: When a train starts leaving the station . . .

Stearns: If people think you're gonna lose, votes can just melt away.

Dougherty: See, just like on the Eagleton vote, there were all kinds of rumors around the floor that we didn't have the votes.

HST: Yeah, I was on the floor. People were trying to leave.

Stearns: We didn't turn it on at that point because we knew we had the votes, and if we turned it on, we would have destroyed the atmosphere for McGovern's presentation.

HST: For good or ill.

Dougherty: It's the first time for the history of this country that the presidential nominating speech was given at three o'clock in the morning.

Stearns: It was one of the best hours in the history of the Democratic party, that hour. I almost cried.

HST: That was the best speech I've ever heard him give. I've been following the campaign ever since way back in New Hampshire, and that's the best I've ever heard him speak.

Dougherty: He had 126 guys writing his speech for him, but I think he wrote it himself.

HST: Whose idea was it to put in the line about you won't have Nixon to kick around anymore? I thought that was the best part of the . . .

Stearns: That was his. "I want those doors open and that war closed" was also his idea.

HST: That was a good shot at Nixon. I saw it was almost over, so I decided to flee. I was in the cab listening to it on the way back, and the cab driver—a total stranger—just turned around and laughed, as if I understood somehow, too.

HST: Where are you going now?

Stearns: I'm getting my assignments these days from the New York Times There are things that I read about in the Times before anybody talked to me. As I understand it from Jim McNaughton's latest story, I'm supposed to take the states west of the Mississippi.

HST: Is that in today?

Stearns: It was in the Times yesterday. First I ever heard of it, It really pissed me off. I mean, somebody ought to tell me before . . .

Dougherty: That's George McGovern for ya.

Stearns: Yeah, but if you got time to talk to Jim McNaughton, you got time . . .

Dougherty: What about Dick Stout's Newsweek story?

Stearns: I didn't see that.

Dougherty: Did you see that one Monday? About Dick Dougherty being press secretary and Mankiewicz traveling. Hart being in charge of the campaign.

Stearns: Oh yeah, they had you in there as a seasoned political pro.

Dougherty: Yeah. He got that in Maryland the day I was out there with McGovern. I found out it was gonna be in there. So I went to Dick Stout and I said, "Where in the hell did you get that?" Dick Stout said he ran into Fred Dutton comin' outta the bank in Washington and Fred told him the whole deal. Then Dutton came to me and he said, "I wonder if Cunningham [McGovern's administrative assistant] and those guys know about it." So I said, "I haven't heard anything about it."

When I got in town I got ahold of Dick Dougherty [McGovern's Press Secretary] and told him the whole deal and he said, "For chrissakes." So he got ahold of Dick Stout and found out exactly how much was gonna be in that story and then I went to Gary and I said, "Here's what's gonna be in Newsweek on Monday. I think some of these guys should be aware." Cunningham wasn't even aware, or any of them. But that's typical George McGovern, you know.

(Garbled conversation. Whistling. Clicks. Airplane.)

HST: You taking off today?

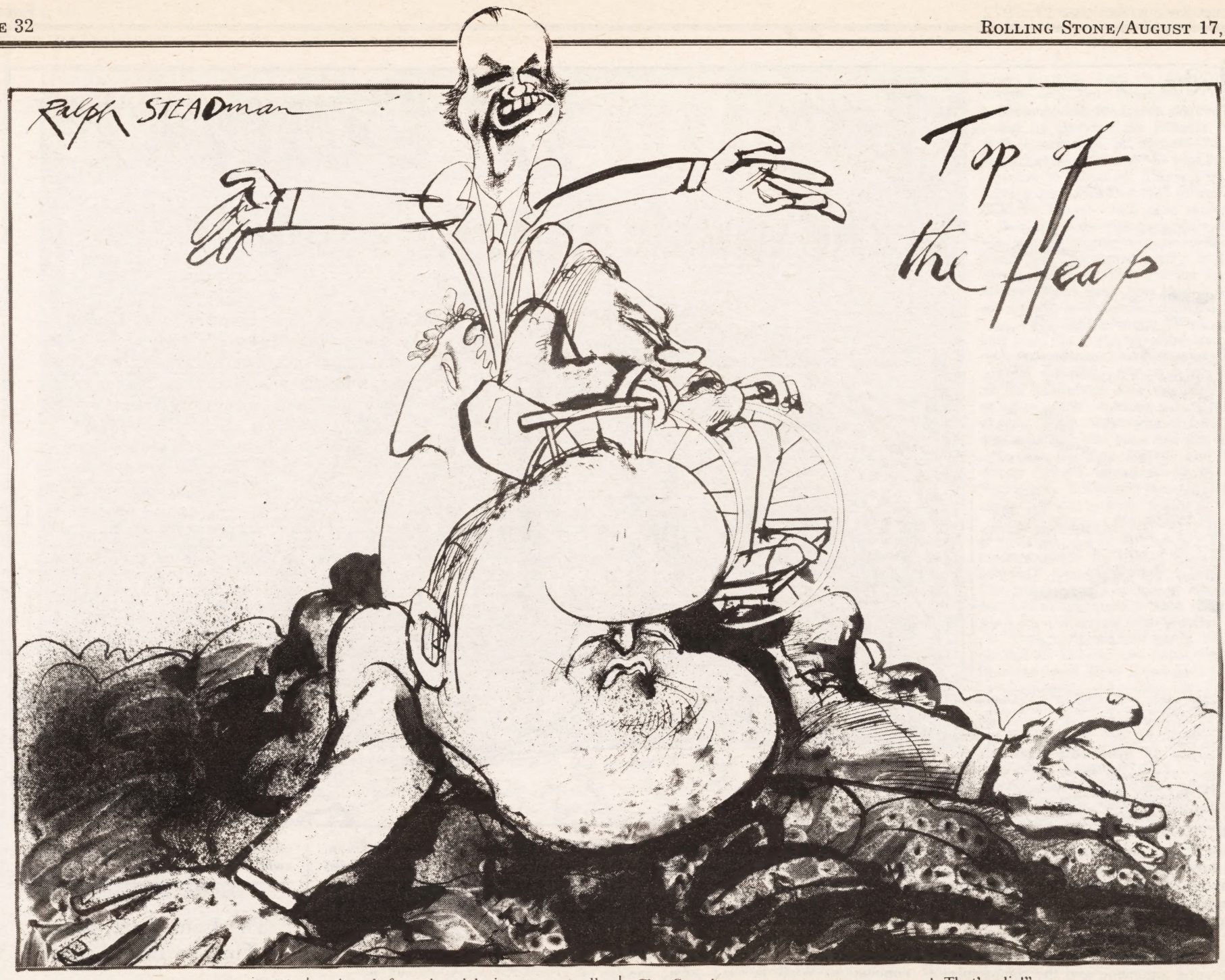
Stearns: No, I think not. If I can get on a plane tomorrow. I feel like sitting out here on this beach and drinking for awhile.

The Late, Late Show; Time to Flee Again

It was somewhere around eight-thirty or nine on Sunday evening when I dragged myself off the plane from Miami. The '72 Democratic Convention was over. McGovern had wrapped it up just before dawn on Friday, accepting the bloody nomination with an elegant, finely crafted speech that might have had quite an impact on the national TV audience . . . (Time correspondent Hugh Sidey called it "perhaps as pure an expression as George McGovern has ever given of his particular moralistic sense of the nation.") . . . but the main, middle-American bulk of the national TV audience tends to wither away, around midnight, and anybody still glued to the tube at 3:30 AM, Miami time, is probably too stoned or twisted to recognize McGovern anyway .

A few hundred ex-Muskie/Humphrey/Jackson delegates had lingered long enough to cheer Ted Kennedy's bland speech, but they started drifting away when George came on—hurrying out the exits of the air-conditioned hall, into the muggy darkness of the parking lot to fetch up a waiting cab and go back to whichever one of the 65 official convention hotels they were staying in . . . hoping to catch the tail end of a party or at least one free drink before catching a few hours' sleep and then heading back home on one of the afternoon planes: Back to St. Louis, Altoona, Butte . . .

By sundown on Friday the "political hotels" were almost empty. In the Doral Beach—McGovern's ocean-front headquarters hotel—Southern Bell Telephone workers were dragging what looked like about 5000 miles of multicolored wires, junction boxes and cables out of the empty Press/Operations complex on the mezzanine. Down in the lobby, a Cuban wedding (Martinez-Hernandez: 8:30-10:30) had taken over the vast, ornately-sculptured Banquet Room that 24 hours earlier had been jammed with hundreds of young, scruffy-looking McGovern volunteers, celebrating the end of one of the longest and most unlikely trips in the history of American politics . . . it was a quiet party, by most Convention standards: Free beer for the troops, bring your own grass,



guitar-minstrels working out here and there; but not much noise, no whooping & shouting, no madness. . . .

The atmosphere at the victory party was not much different from the atmosphere of the Convention itself: very cool and efficient, very much under control at all times . . . get the job done, don't fuck around, avoid violence, shoot ten seconds after you see the whites of their eyes.

It was a McGovern party from start to finish. Everything went according to plan—or *almost* everything; as always, there were a few stark exceptions. Minor snarls here and there, but not many big ones. McGovern brought his act into Miami with the same kind of fine-focus precision that carried him all the way from New Hampshire to California . . . and, as usual, it made all the other acts look surprisingly sloppy.

I was trapped in the Doral for 10 days, shuttling back & forth between the hotel and the Convention Hall by any means available: Taxi, my rented green convertible, and occasionally down the canal in the fast white "staff taxi" speedboat that McGovern's people used to get from the Doral to the Hall by water, whenever Collins Avenue was jammed up with sight-seer traffic . . . and in retrospect, I think that boat trip was the only thing I did all week that I actually enjoyed.

There was a lot of talk in the press about "the spontaneous outburst of fun and games" on Thursday night—when the delegates, who had been so deadly serious for the first three sessions, suddenly ran wild on the floor and delayed McGovern's long-awaited acceptance speech until 3:30 AM by tying the convention in knots with a long outburst of frivolous squabbling over the vice-presidential nomination. Newsweek described it as "a comic interlude, a burst of silliness on the part of the delegates whose taut bonds of decorum and discipline seemed suddenly to snap, now that it didn't make any difference."

There was not much laughter in Miami, on the floor or anywhere else, and from where I stood that famous "comic interlude" on Thursday night looked more like the first scattered signs of mass Fatigue Hysteria, if the goddamn thing didn't end soon. What the press mistook for relaxed levity was actually a mood of ugly restlessness that by 3:00 AM on Friday was bordering on rebellion. All over the floor I saw people caving in to the lure of booze, and in the crowded aisle between the California and Wisconsin delegations a smiling freak with a bottle of liquid THC was giving free hits to anybody who still had the strength to stick their tongue out.

After four hours of listening to a seemingly endless parade of shameless dingbats who saw no harm in cadging some free exposure on national TV by nominating each other for vice-president, about half the delegates in the hall were beginning to lose control. On the floor just in front of the New York delegation, leaning against the now-empty VIP box once occupied by Muriel Humphrey, a small blonde girl who once worked for the Lindsay campaign was sharing a nasal inhaler full of crushed amyls with a handful of new-found friends.

Each candidate was entitled to a 15-minute nominating speech and two five-minute seconding speeches. The nightmare dragged on for four hours, and after the first 40 minutes there was not one delegate in 50, on the floor, who either knew or cared who was speaking. No doubt there were flashes of eloquence, now and then: probably Mike Gravel and Cissy Farentholt said a few things that might have been worth hearing, under different circumstances . . . but on that long Thursday night in Miami, with Sen. Tom Eagleton of Missouri waiting nervously in the wings to come out and accept the vice-presidential nomination that McGovern had sealed for him 12 hours earlier, every delegate in the hall understood that whatever these other seven candidates were saying up there on the rostrum, they were saying for reasons that had nothing to do with who was going to be the Democratic candidate for vice-president in November . . . and it was *not* going to be ex-Mass. governor "Chub" Peabody, or a grinning dimwit named Stanley Arnold from New York City who said he was The Businessman's Candidate, or some black Step'n'Fetchit-style Wallace Delegate from Texas called Clay Smothers.

But these brainless bastards persisted, nonetheless, using up half the night and all the prime time on TV, debasing the whole convention with a blizzard of self-serving gibberish that drove whatever was left of the national TV audience to bed or the *Late Late Show*.

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Thursday was not a good day for McGovern. By noon there was not much left of Wednesday night's Triumphant Warrior smile. He spent most of Thursday afternoon grappling with a long list of vice-presidential possibilities and by two, the Doral lobby was foaming with reporters and TV cameras. The name had to be formally submitted by 3:59 PM, but it was 4:05 when Mankiewicz finally appeared to say McGovern had decided on Senator Thomas Eagleton of Missouri.

There is a very tangled story behind that choice, but I don't feel like writing it now. My immediate reaction was not enthusiastic, and the staff people I talked to seemed vaguely depressed — if only because it was a concession to "the Old Politics," a nice-looking Catholic boy from Missouri with friends in the Labor Movement. His acceptance speech that night was not memorable — perhaps because it was followed by the long-awaited appearance of Ted Kennedy, who had turned the job down.

Kennedy's speech was not memorable either: "Let us bury the hatchet, etc . . . and Get Behind the Ticket." There was something hollow about it, and when McGovern came on he made Kennedy sound like an old-timer.

Later that night, at a party on the roof of the Doral, a McGovern staffer asked me who I would have chosen for VP. I finally said I would have chosen Ron Dellums, the black congressman from Berkeley.

"Jesus christ!" he said. "That would be suicide!"

I shrugged.

"Why Dellums?" he asked.

"Why not?" I said. "He offered it to Mayor Daley before he called Eagleton."

"No!" he shouted. "Not Daley! That's a lie!"

"I was in the room when he made the call," I said. "Ask anybody who was there — Gary, Frank, Dutton — they weren't happy about it, but they said he'd be good for the ticket."

He stared at me. "What did Daley say?" he asked finally.

I laughed. "Christ, you *believed* that, didn't you?"

He had, for just an instant. After all there was a lot of talk about "pragmatism" in Miami, and Illinois was a key state . . . . I decided to try the Daley rumor on other staff people, to see their reactions.

But I never got around to it, I forgot all about it, in fact, until flipping through my notebook on the midnight jet from Atlanta. I came across a statement by Ron Dellums. It depressed me, for some reason, but it seems like a good way to end this goddamn thing. Dellums writes pretty good, for a politician. It's part of the statement he distributed when he switched his support from Shirley Chisholm to McGovern:

"The great bulk of that coalition committed to change, human freedom and justice in the country has moved actively and powerfully behind the candidacy of Senator McGovern. That coalition of hope, conscience, morality and humanity—of the powerless and the voiceless—that did not exist in 1964, that expressed itself in outrage and frustration in 1968, and in 1972 began to form and welded itself imperfectly but courageously and lifted a man to the brink of the Democratic nomination for the Presidency of the United States, and within a short but laborious step from the Presidency of the United States. The coalition that has formed behind Senator McGovern has battled the odds, baffled the pollsters, and beat the bosses. It is my conviction that when that total coalition of the victims in this country is ever formed, this potential for change would be unheralded, for it could pose a real alternative to expediency and status quo politics in America."

—Ron Dellums: July 9, 1972